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OWEN TUDOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLOWERING OAK OF PENMYNYDD.

The Isle of Anglesea, once the chief seat of a religion more ancient than the memory of history, and the royal residence of sovereigns who pretended to an almost equal antiquity, seems indeed to have shared the fate of all things human. At present it is chiefly as the high road to Ireland that either priests or princes honour it with their attention. The sacred isle of the Druids, the stronghold and refuge of Welsh freedom and royalty during so many ages, has come to a pretty pass, it must be allowed, when it is merely reckoned as so many miles to be posted or railed over with all possible speed, on the way to the "still-vex'd Bermoothes" of the British seas!

But so it is; and so in all probability it will remain, even with that indefatigable sight-seer, the summer tourist, whose stock of picturesque enthusiasm and admiration is in general exhausted by the time he reaches the sea-washed bases of the majestic mountains which bound the mainland. Moreover, there is little to rekindle those sensations when once the stern shores of the isle are passed, and the traveller finds himself crossing the wild tracts of rocky or marshy pasturage which form the interior of Anglesea, scantily wooded, and grazed by endless herds of oxen and sheep, whose heads seem scarcely ever raised from the short sweet herbage which they are unconsciously engaged in converting into the finest beef and mutton eaten under the wide sweep of the British sceptre.

And yet one would imagine that a country which sends travellers to the plains of Troy, to dispute if such a city ever existed, might occasionally spare a few to contemplate the remains of a national antiquity perhaps more remote, in the shape of the numerous Druidical monuments scattered amidst the wilds of Anglesea. Even the mediæval antiquary might

spend as useful hours as he can at a much greater distance and expense, endeavouring to rebuild in fantasy the splendours of the royal Aberffraw, or, indeed, to discover its site with any certainty; or in wandering among the ruined abbeys and castles which still attest a bygone prosperity of no ordinary magnificence. Scarcely any one thinks it worth while to turn aside even to visit what remains of the family residence possessed by the ancestors of that right royal and, truth to say, right truculent and hot-blooded dynasty of the Tudors, who have left such lasting traces in our annals, and who probably owed no slight portion of their deeds and renown to the influence of that fiery Cambrian original.

It is true, we must again confess, that the most diligent researches would discover but little to gratify curiosity, and that no one, unenlightened by tradition, could possibly guess that the founder of so lofty and imperial a race first beheld the light in a wild which seems chiefly intended by nature for the breeding and fattening of the jolly beeves and muttons whose praises we have already chanted. But the tourist who has wandered at Aberffraw over all that remains of the palace of Roderic the Great, without being in the least conscious of the circumstance until admonished by his guide, will not be greatly surprised to find that the dwelling of a race which, after the accession of Henry VII. to the throne, was unanimously certified by the Welsh bards to descend from the mighty Arthur himself, has shrunk into an inconsiderable farm-house! A carved mantelpiece, some scattered piles of massive masonry, rude sculptures of escutcheons and heraldic ornaments, degraded by all sorts of rural intermixtures, are all the vestiges which remain to reward the labours of the antiquary. Oxen may low and pigs may grunt amidst the foundations of the chamber where the progenitor of the fiery-haired and fiery-hearted Elizabeth was born!

Penmynydd, as the place is still called (we beseech the reader not to be daunted by the appearance of the word, but to pronounce it boldly as if the y's were u's), was probably at no period much more than the rudely fortified dwelling of a Welsh chieftain, devised rather as the lodging and place of refuge of a half-savage clan of shepherds and huntsmen than as an exhibition of taste or comfort in domestic architecture. But its claims, even to answer purposes so simple, seemed gone by at a period as remote as the beginning of the seventeenth year of the fifteenth century, when our chronicle undertakes the description. The long wars between the Welsh and

their Anglo-Norman invaders, which closed not many years before in the suppression of the great rebellion of Glendower (for it is a mistake to imagine that the conquest effected by Edward I. in the thirteenth century was a subjugation), covered all Wales with ruin and desolation, but left special traces in Anglesea. At the time we speak of, the greater part of the mansion and all the village of Penmynydd lay in ruins, beneath the observation of a personage who emerged with the earliest peep of day from the remains of a once massive tower of stonework, blackened and browned with the action of fire, if he had been so superfluous as to take notice of circumstances which were probably very familiar to him.

The mansion or castle of Penmynydd, as according to Welsh ideas it might be called, originally consisted of a group of buildings of unhewn timber, surrounded by a wall and moat, on the summit of an eminence, whence it took its designation, signifying in English the Mountain Head. Two strong towers of masonry, united by a circular keep, formed its chief strength in former times, but were now isolated by the destruction of the central pile, and of the greater part of the towers themselves. The aspect of these buildings and of the ruined huts which strewed the hill side attested that the destroying agent was fire; but several years had evidently elapsed since the time of its application, for grass and foliage covered the traces of devastation in many parts. One of the towers seemed still inhabited, to judge from the smoke which wreathed from among the oak trees surrounding it; and that from which the person we have alluded to emerged seemed used as a stable, for the shrill neigh of a horse followed him to the exterior.

He was apparently a young peasant, of the usual middle stature and stout build of the Welsh mountaineer, with a blythe audacity and liveliness in his black eyes, and a shrewdness of expression on his square forehead and strong-cut features that betokened well for the qualities of the mind and character which stamp themselves in those lineaments. He was garbed, according to the simple fashion of the country and time, in a kind of loose frock of blue woollen, which descended to his muscular red knees, and was fastened at the waist with a leather belt, in which was stuck a long naked knife. His arms and legs were bare, but his feet were twisted with rope in the manner of a low boot, and declared a purpose of locomotion over some peculiarly rough and flinty route, without which such luxuries were seldom effected. The ex

traordinary pace into which he broke almost as soon as he had leaped, with the aid of a long staff, over a stream which rushed at the base of the castle hill, and gained the open ground, justified the supposition. At first his movement was a rapid walk, which changed to a kind of trot, and finally into the bounding gallop of a stag—with the speed of which animal he passed over the rocky and uneven country stretching in the direction he took, in which the view was uninterrupted to the sea-coast and the waves of the Menaj, beyond which the skies were piled with the mountains of Caernarvonshire, tipped by the white peaks of Snowdon. Nor did this wild messenger, for such he was, seem to require a moment's breathing pause, or at all events to take one, until he reached the coast and the summit of the precipitous rocks which overlooked the dangerous shoals called the Swelly Rocks, a distance of several miles.

It was full tide, and the sea was churning with great fury among the sunken rocks in the channel below. But the messenger deigned not a moment's attention to the uproar and tumultuous play of billows. Kneeling on the verge of the rocks where the violence of the wind would scarcely have suffered him to stand upright, he gazed intently towards the north along the widening straits which divide Anglesea from the mainland. No mighty bridge then flung itself fearlessly as an arch of heaven over the waters, and no object broke the line of view to Beaumaris save the waves rolling silvery white in the daybreak, and the lonely sail of some fisherman venturing timidly forth in the blustering breeze. Both shores of the straits were visible almost to their termination in the open sea, presenting to the left a lofty but rapidly and deeply undulating shore, on the right a succession of rocky hills rising one above the other till they terminated abruptly in the mountainous precipice of Penmaen Mawr.

The object of the islander's researches was apparently soon discovered, from the joyful manner in which, though alone, he clapped his hands and uttered an exclamation of satisfaction, when, after gazing for a short time, he noticed the appearance of a small barque which, with all its sails spread, rounded a projecting headland on the Anglesea shore. To eyes less keen and practised this might have seemed a common fishing-boat of small dimensions, too remote to be distinguished by any peculiar sign. But Rhys ap Goronwy discerned the colour of the oarsmen's garments, and, above all, the person of the voyager at the rudder, who, with a

strong and dexterous arm, guided the course of the vessel. The exceeding rapidity of the current, which scarcely allowed the rowers to give their oars an occasional dip, made the passage somewhat dangerous, more especially when the barque entered among the rushing gullies and breakers of the channel below the rocks on which the kerne had posted himself. He seemed, however, to have no misgivings with regard to the safety of the voyagers, but immediately he was satisfied that the object he sought was before him, commenced sliding and shelving like a large sea-fowl down the precipitous declivity, until he reached a little creek at its base, which allowed anchorage for such small craft as the one approaching. He had scarcely shaken the sand and weeds, with which this transit covered him, from his hair and garments, ere the fling of a huge and overboiling wave sent the boat headlong, but in perfect safety, on the shingles at his feet. Two or three of the voyagers instantly leaped out and dragged it by main force to a higher point ere the return of the wave could carry them out again; and then the youth who acted as pilot, and who was evidently the chief personage of the party, left his hold of the rudder, and placed himself by a single active effort on some rocks which jutted so as to form a kind of landing-place.

Casting to one of his attendants a long mantle of wolf-skins, which he wore fastened round his throat by the gilded paws of the same animal, and which was covered with sea-froth, and removing his cap of similar material to shake the spray from its heavy plume of white herons' feathers, and from his own thick curling golden-brown hair, where it glimmered like dew on the blossoms of the laburnum, a figure and countenance appeared which would have riveted the admiration of a painter or of a sculptor. Either might have taken it as a perfect model, in stature, proportions, and rich colouring, for the robust beauty of the hunter whom the Queen of Love loved;' or perhaps, from the fiery, haughty, and impetuous character of the physiognomy, though still in the earliest and almost womanly bloom of youth, as an ideal of the young Achilles when he passed for a nymph among the daughters of the ocean, and the moment approached in which he rushed to seize the shield and spear which revealed his sex and warlike instincts to the craft of Ulysses! His naturally very fair complexion was of a ruddy, sunny hue, with exposure to the various moods of the changeable mountain skies and the rude exercises to which his fine but very powerful and active

frame was evidently accustomed. The freedom and daring of the mountaineer were in all his gestures, and above all in the wild, varying, eagle-like flash of his large steel-blue eyes, which seemed yet, by the rapid shadow which darkened them as his glance fell on the messenger, capable of expressing the deepest and gloomiest passions of humanity as vividly as those of martial or amorous ardour—to which, indeed, the fierce and glowing blood of the Cymbri almost equally prompts those in whose veins it flows. When to these personal characteristics of the young voyager we add those of his garb—his short frock, or tunic, of home-spun but most brilliantly hued plaid, the light breastplate of silver mail, the belt in which was set a short sword, the crossbow fastened by a loose scarf over his shoulders, the undressed deerskin boots, and the golden collar which clasped his snowy woollen shirt at the throat and declared the nobility of the wearer—there was scarcely a peasant of the isle or neighbouring mountains who would not have recognised young Owen Tudor of Penmynydd, or, as he was more popularly and poetically styled, The Flowering Oak of the Hill.

The youthful chieftain's eye fell, as we have noted, with evident anxiety upon the person of the messenger, who respectfully claimed his attention by bending almost to his rope mocassins, and wishing the sweetest breath of the morning to his honourable lord's special use. Owen turned pale as he recognised the vassal, and he replied with evident agitation in Welsh, as he was addressed, "How is it with my father, Rhys? Why art thou here? Is he worse, or—what has chanced that thou art here?"

"The aged snow melts fast in the spring, but not faster than the Chief of Penmynydd is passing away!" replied the messenger in the figurative form in which the Celtic dialects delight. "The corpse lights have shown on Snowdon, and marked the way of the funeral of a son of Arthur! I am sent to bid ap Tudor lose no steps on the road, lest his father's mouth be full of dust ere he can leave a blessing on his head."

"Does the Saxon mediciner, then, give no hope? and has the sign on Snowdon appeared?" returned the young chief, turning still paler, while the wan colours of awe and superstitious dread passed over the visages of his hardy attendants.

"Penmynydd himself has seen it! With his own eyes he watched the funeral procession descend Snowdon and cross the sea, even to the sandy vaults of Llanvaes!" replied the clansman. "But he will not suffer the Saxon gatherer of

poisons to see him, not even when he learned that you had yourself sent for him to the city of the boiling springs. 'He may cure the mange among the mongrel dogs of England!' he says, 'but shall not tamper with the blood of the pure breed of Britain!'"

"We have received ill enough from the hands of the Saxon, to endure a little good," said Owen; "but, since the Canwyll Corph has shone on the crags of the Eagle, all were in vain! Let us hasten, indeed, lest a stranger should close my father's eyes."

The belief in the dreary superstition thus designated is still prevalent in Wales; but a few centuries ago was so firmly rooted among the general mass of popular delusions, that it was no wonder Owen abandoned the slender hopes to which he had hitherto clung, coupling the fact of the appearance of the funeral lights on Snowdon with the state of prostration in which he left his father on the previous day, when, as a last resource, he sailed with an offering to the shrine of St. Elian, on the extremity of the coast. The intercession of this saint was believed to be of the greatest efficacy in restoring the sick to health; but it was probably rather as a means of diverting the sorrow of his son, whom death was about to deprive of his only near kinsman, than with any hope of his own, that the exhausted chieftain despatched him on the errand. Owen imagined he was bringing some hope from the shrine of the benevolent saint; but the intelligence he now learned made him almost fear he should be too late even to rejoice his father's dying eyes with his own safe return. For several years the Lord of Penmynydd had been wasting away under the sufferings caused by an incurable wound in his knee, inflicted, as he always averred, by a poisoned arrow from a Saxon bow, at the battle of Shrewsbury, where he fought side by side with Glendower and Hotspur against the House of Lancaster. On a sudden this wound had burst into a bleeding which no effort could staunch, and the patient was sinking fast under the continued drain of the vital fluid, at which, according to Rhys ap Goronwy, death himself was sucking like a hound at the throat of the deer. But we must preface the arrival of our filial devotee at the scene of suffering with some preliminary information, without which we doubt if some of the details to follow can be clearly understood.

The dying chieftain of Penmynydd, according to Welsh traditions and his own implicit belief, was descended in a

direct and unbroken line, not merely from the historical princes of the land, but from that mighty Arthur of Britain whose very existence it has pleased the incredulous of modern times to dispute. During the centuries of struggle which the Welsh maintained against successive races of invaders—Danes and Saxons, Normans and Anglo-Normans—the Tudors were renowned in the songs of the bards as being among the most valiant, resolute, and patriotically bloodthirsty in resistance or in vengeance. The father of Owen remained faithful as his ancestors to the cause of national freedom which endeared their name and glories to those empassioned expositors of popular feeling, by taking a most active and determined part in the last great Welsh rebellion—that of Owen Glendower, which, prosperous for awhile, ended in the ruin of himself and of all who sided with him, and in the final subjection of those valiant Celtic tribes to the destined supremacy of the Saxo-Norman race. The Chief of Penmynydd was renowned as almost the sole adherent of the illustrious rebel who remained faithful to him through all his varied but finally disastrous fortunes.

There were not wanting detractors to insinuate that this devotion was in some measure owing to the belief which the Tudors entertained of their descent from the ancient kings of Wales, and to the splendid hopes which such a claim might substantiate in the event of the national triumph. But as nearly all the great families of Wales traced their descent from some source of native royalty, not a few placing the well-spring still more loftily than the Tudors, and Glendower himself assumed the diadem of the principality without abating their zeal in his cause, the suspicion seems but little founded. That warlike magician possessed every quality which can influence to enthusiasm in a rude, valiant, and superstitious age, without seeking the causes of his success in motives of a selfish and personal nature among his supporters. A brave, and long a successful soldier, a wizard and star-gazer who was believed by the greater part even of his own followers to have the elements at command,—so well did they serve him in his great needs!—Glendower had every claim on the affection and reverence of his ardent and half-barbarous partisans. Until the heroic Magus, grown old and hopeless, deserted himself and yielded to the overwhelming power of his enemies, the Chief of Penmynydd adhered to him with the tenacity of the main timber to some noble wreck when planks and masts, and streamers and cordage are all

rent away, leaving only the dismantled hull to brave the fury of the winds and waves.

But, whatever might have been the motives of the Tudors in their adherence to the cause of Glendower, the personal results of the warlike labours in which their chieftain spent the years of his manhood, were simply the forfeiture of such lands as his ancestors had not lost by a similar process, and the satisfaction of finding himself and his wizard prince vanquished by a raw youth, whom all the world thought incapable of any enterprise of valour and conduct. It was little consolation to the Lord of Penmynydd, that in after-years the gay young wassailer, who left the taverns of London to signalize the dawn of his heroic manhood in the overthrow of the people whose diadem he bore as Prince of Wales, proved also the conqueror of France, and made the name of Henry V. for ever glorious in the annals of England.

But, though vanquished in the field, and curbed on every side by the strong garrisons introduced by the English into the very heart of their fastnesses, the Welsh were far from yielding implicit submission to their conquerors. Still, the wise moderation of the government introduced by Henry V. among his Welsh conquests, the efforts which he made to ingratiate himself with the people,—above all, the blaze of military glory which surrounded his name, always a dazzling lure to nations of Celtic blood,—produced in progress of time a remarkable effect on the upper classes of the people and nobility, if not on the great mass of the population of Wales. This was specially the case in the countries more immediately under the English sway, or bordering on the English counties. The remote and mountainous districts were, of course, the latest in suffering this new light to stream in upon them; but even Snowdon itself could not always interpose its mighty shadow between the islanders of Anglesea and the progress of the neighbouring civilization. Almost alone among his equals and former companions in arms, the Lord of Penmynydd continued to defy the conquerors, and, like a dark cloud in a brightening sky, suffered no shred of his gloom to mingle or dissipate in the new radiance.

True it is, that very few of those who had suffered the most in the penalties of rebellion had so much to complain of as the Tudors. Their chief found himself reduced, by the confiscation of nearly all his inheritance, below the degree of a simple gentleman among the "Saxon heap," as the Welsh term politely designated the collective English people. Little

more remained to the ancient Lords of Penmynydd, of all their once great possessions, but a title, which was conceded to them by the courtesy of custom, or the traditionary respect of the serfs and vassals of their alienated lands, rather than by any right of property. Dwelling amidst the ruins of his battered ancestral home and those of his slaughtered kinsfolk and adherents, it was no wonder that the progress of time had little influence in allaying the animosity of the brother-in-arms of Glendower. On the contrary, the daily contemplation of these circumstances, and the consciousness that he was an object of distrust and suspicion with the conquerors, continually added to the rancour of his feelings. It was still more bitter, when he felt at last that he was forgotten and overlooked by his enemies, and that he had not even the distinction to continue feared and disliked by them. The English governors, secure in the glories of their king, and in the general face of pacification which the country exhibited, thought they could afford to despise the obstinate scorn and hatred of an old half-barbarous chief of a destroyed clan, whom they called, in derision of the lameness caused by the wound in his knee, the "Torn Wolf." While all the rest of the nobles and gentry of the isle gradually veered round, like the heads of onions, to the warm beams of the sun of power, the Tudors of Penmynydd kept theirs resolutely turned to the wind and the sleet, and continued religiously in the faith and expectation of a time of vengeance and retribution.

It may be imagined that the beautiful cub of the "Torn Wolf" was not trained in a manner to make it probable he would at any time slip his neck even into the splendid gilded collars offered by the policy of the conquerors. Owen might almost be said to have been born in hatred and warfare with the invaders, since his mother gave him life amidst the wilds of Snowdon, flying from the ravages committed throughout Anglesea by the English, in their wrath at the escape of the Welsh army to those mountain fastnesses whither it was impossible for their heavy-armed forces to pursue. His earliest recollections were stored with scenes of the confusion and bloodshed which marked every stage of the last great struggle of the Welsh with their invaders. The very songs which lulled his infancy asleep were rude odes either of triumph or lamentation, legends of the glories of his ancestors or of the misdeeds of the Saxons, as the English were always called, or of fearful acts of retaliation and vengeance, which his very nurses told him he was born to imitate.

Hatred of the English he thus imbibed with his mother's milk, but the peculiar detestation in which he held their warlike king was something more than the mere vague influence of the atmosphere of opinion which surrounded his childhood. The very name of Henry of Monmouth was odious to the father of Owen Tudor. Until the young prince appeared on the scene of action, Glendower was almost always successful in his enterprises; but his star paled as soon as Henry's arose. The indefatigable zeal and courage displayed by the youthful warrior at length wearied out even the wiles and patience of the mountaineers. He brought them to encounters in which he always defeated them, and the crafty policy of Henry IV. ably followed up the warlike successes of his son. It could not be doubted that the destruction of the glorious hopes entertained by the Welsh and their leaders was mainly to be attributed to the exertions of the royal general, who was now renowned over Europe as the victor on a vaster arena. Accordingly, he was the principal object of the animosity of the vanquished; and the Lord of Penmynydd had the special ground of resentment to know that his mansion was reduced to ruins, and his estates confiscated, by the express commands of the prince, who was exasperated at the obstinacy of his adherence to the fallen cause of Glendower, and the ferocious defiances which he returned to all his offers of pardon and mercy.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHECY OF GLENDOWER.

UNDER such auspices Owen Tudor saw the light, and passed the first years of his life. The fierce blood of the race which circulated in his veins was not likely to be tamed by any circumstance in his early education. His mother died within a few hours of his birth, and he spent his childhood in the hut of a foster-mother, amidst the wildest and deepest solitudes of Snowdon. Thence he was transferred to the ruined home of his ancestors, and abandoned almost exclusively to the care of the wild retinue who still shared the broken fortunes of their lord. These consisted of a few servitors, too old to seek new fortunes, had they been willing to desert their chieftain to eat at the plentiful boards of the Saxons who had shared his lands amongst them, and some maimed relics of the disastrous wars of Glendower. Among the former was a bard

who had been in the family nearly a century, and was descended from a long line of poetical ancestry enjoying the same office.

The young descendant of their lords was an object of almost idolatrous affection with all these survivors of the shattered clan, and his childish caprices were gratified with even more zeal than if he had still been the inheritor of the princely fortunes of his ancestors. The beauty of the child might alone have recommended him to the affection of all who beheld him, but his talents and favourite pursuits were of a kind which endeared him more effectually to his father's vassalage. His love of arms, and of every species of robust exercise, delighted the old serfs, who had spent their manhood in the restless warfare of Glendower's rebellion. His enthusiasm for the chase, his daring and unwearied pursuit of the ferocious game of the mountains, made the aged huntsmen prophesy in him a second Llewellyn the Great, the rash master of the faithful Gelert, to whom is attributed the saying, "that no meat is worth eating that has not been run for from sunrise to sunset." The pleasure he took in music, and his rapid progress through all the stages of science on the harp, from that of Disgybl, or disciple, to the elevated rank of Pencerdd, or doctor, consoled the ancient bard of his house, almost reduced to despair by the obstinate unpoeticalness of his grandson Rhys, who ought to have been his successor in the office.

It almost seemed as if the Chief of Penmynydd intended to limit his son's accomplishments within this narrow circle, and that he took delight in rearing him, as if in defiance of the Saxon civilization, in the rudest fashion of his half-barbarous ancestry. There was, in fact, nothing which he dreaded more than that his son should become a scholar, one terrible example of which had occurred in the family in the person of a great uncle, who studied himself out of all martial and soldierly likings into a fat Saxon abbacy! The only acquirement which the chieftain seemed to consider necessary for his son was a knowledge of the French tongue, which was communicated to him by a learned monk of the neighbouring monastery of Llanvaes, who had studied in his youth at the University of Paris, then the most renowned in Europe. Perhaps even this concession was due to the circumstance that France was the only powerful country whence aid against the English might be hoped or implored, and with whose language it was therefore of consequence to be familiar. The

chieftain remembered the great inconvenience which had arisen in the time of Glendower, from the inability of the Welsh leaders to comprehend their French allies' incessant discourse.

The good old friar was glad of an occasion to brush up the learning of his youth, which, in his obscure monastery, he had since found of very little use. But rarely was there a more untractable pupil, in spite of the singular vivacity of his talents, than Owen Tudor. His free and wandering childhood, the robust exercises in which he delighted, rendered study and confinement inexpressibly irksome and disgusting to him. He knew all, so the bard assured him, which his ancestors were accustomed to know. He could dart a spear farther than the strongest man he had yet coped with; he was master of the short massive sword and ponderous axe of his fathers; he could ride the fleetest horses, and govern the fiercest; he could lift seemingly impossible weights, not only with his hands, but with his teeth; he could race down the deer of Snowdon on foot, and struggle weaponless with its large and courageous wolf. He was considered the most vigorous and active dancer in all the island; and his skill in music was renowned among a people passionately sensitive and alive to its influence. He inherited his father's contempt and hatred not only for the Saxons, but for their arts and arms; and every kind of science was instinctively connected in his mind with their progress and triumph, for the Welsh had learned to dread and despise, almost equally, the mechanical discipline and superiority which had vanquished them.

Luckily, Father Emrys, or Ambrosius, as he was called in his convent, was in possession of a work in the French language recording the achievements of the chivalry of the Round Table, which he himself had most diligently compiled from the recitations of minstrels, the lays of jongleurs, and the authentic archives of the troubadours and romancers of France. The subject possessed an inexhaustible interest to the Welsh monk, holding, as he did, these legends to be the true history and record of the most glorious period of his country's supremacy. He delighted to relate the toils and pains he had undergone to acquire the precious contents of the vast tome, in illuminating and emblazoning which, with every variety of illustration and ornament known to the rich though grotesque art of the fifteenth century, he had spent his time and fortune ever since. The pilgrimage he had undertaken to the most distant castles or mansions which possessed any fragment of

this literature, however short; his zealous pursuit of the minstrels and story-tellers who he imagined might know some tale with which he was unacquainted; his researches in the dusty manuscripts of colleges and abbeys—furnished anecdotes innumerable to almost every section of the ponderous narrative. The magnificent volume which enshrined it won the attention and admiration of Owen, and, when every other means of persuasion or menace failed, animated him to attempt the conquest of the language in whose custody the explanation of those gorgeous limnings was firmly locked.

The achievements of Arthur and his paladins had lost their originally wild and barbarous characteristics in the lays and fabliaux of France, and assumed the costume and parlance of the chivalrous courts for whose entertainment the French and Anglo-Norman minstrels adopted those rude but beautiful inventions of Cambrian genius. But a youth in whom the pride of birth and ancestry was fostered by so many circumstances, even by the misfortunes and degradation of his line, could not but take a strong interest in narratives which painted its founders in possession of such dazzling power and glory. He acquired unconsciously many of the ideas and aspirations of that singular system of heroic manners which—ascribed, perhaps justly, to the simple and uncorrupted ancestors of his race—existed in its pomp and splendours only among the cultivated and chivalric nations of Europe. A deep desire gradually grew and matured in his breast to imitate the exploits of the heroes who had left such dazzling traces behind them in a species of history which the Welsh imagined of all others the most authentic—the memory of the bards—with whom his fancy confounded the polished and inventive minstrels of France.

The manners of chivalry were not inspired by what we should now consider a pure morality, but they were sufficiently alluring to the imagination of youth, veiled in their gloss of beauty and military triumph. The loves of the peerless Sir Launcelot du Lake with the wife of his king and benefactor; of the faithful Tristram with the queen of his restless and malignant uncle, Mark; the amorous adventures of fairies and sorceresses so liberally interspersed in the legends of the Round Table; the general dissoluteness of manners depicted; were probably transcribed from the actual state of things among the cultivated nations of Europe, but were so artfully blended with all that were poetical, tender, and heroic in the ancient inventions, that they possessed an irresistible charm

to the mind and heart of the young Welsh chief. Father Ambrosius had soon no reason to complain of any want of diligence in his pupil's labours to gain the power of perusing the volume of glory, and its legends added fuel incessantly to the purposes and hopes which glowed in his heart.

Owen Tudor's ambition had been early awakened by vague intimations from his father of something supernatural and lofty in his destiny connected with the numerous prophecies which from age to age sustained the flagging hopes of the Welsh. The Jews themselves scarcely cherish a more fervid and implicit confidence in the coming of some great deliverer and restorer than the Welsh preserved to console them under the losses and overthrows which signalized the downfal of Glendower. By some it was believed that Arthur himself would burst from the cavern of his enchanted slumbers—from the dreams of a thousand years—and restore his land to liberty. Less irrational reveries suggested that the prophecy was to be fulfilled by some descendant of his blood; and it seemed as if the Chief of Penmynydd adopted this belief, or at all events infused it into his son. The traditionary songs of his foster-mother imbued Owen's childhood with the same notion, and the loftier inspirations and chants of the bard sustained it. He was prompted by almost every motive of revenge and hatred against those who in his own day usurped the heritage of the descendants of Arthur. He found himself, with all his royalty of lineage and ancestry, reduced almost to beggary—and circumstances continually reminded him of it. If he went forth solitary to the chase, the laments of an aged huntsman recalled the time when his fathers never left their halls without a retinue which would have compassed the bounds of Snowdon. He wandered a lurking trespasser in forests which had once owned no other lord than one of his name; he returned in darkness with his quarry lest the watchers of a stranger should behold him bring home the carcasses of deers and wild boars fed on the mast of his own alienated oaks. The worn-out soldiery of Glendower's wars continually poured into his ears tales of their battles and triumphs; the bard was never weary of repeating the legends of the deeds of his ancestors. Even the lettered monk of Llanvaes—whose monastery was almost consumed and its revenues seized by the vengeance of the English—aided, with querulous murmurs that excited his impatience, in the general effect. Owen's anxiety to play a part on the theatre of events, and his weariness of the solitude and inaction to which he was

confined, soon exceeded even the purposes and hopes which the "Torn Wolf" cherished as the only consolation of his own unwilling repose.

But little prospect seemed to remain of any such stirring world as that in which Owen panted to breathe and have his being under the skies of his native land. The Welsh populations generally had lost heart under the pressure of continual ill success, and their natural leaders were either seduced by the glory and liberality of Henry V. to fight under his standard, or were reduced to powerlessness by confiscations and banishment. Owen's aversion, and that of his father, to the race of the conquerors included everything belonging to them, even their useful arts and accomplishments. It was not, therefore, in their schools that Owen mused on the feasibility of acquiring the warlike skill which might conduct him to the glory for which he thirsted. Moreover, with his youthful strength and unmatched skill in the use of the national weapons, he believed that he only needed opportunity to redeem the reproach of barbarism affixed to their use by the iron-clad chivalry of England.

France was the only country which seemed to offer him a pathway to renown; and it had long been the openly announced intention of the Chief of Penmynydd to send his son thither to learn the use of arms in her service. The certainty that his few remaining possessions would become immediately forfeit on the perpetration of so open an act of what would be called treason, in the castle of Beaumaris, acted as some check on this project. The old warrior's excessive fondness for his only issue was another; but the greatest of all was the distracted state of France itself. Amidst the desolation and danger produced by the presence of a foreign and victorious enemy, a civil war continued to rage throughout the length and breadth of the land. The faction of Burgundy was long in the ascendency, and its ferocious duke was supposed to be secretly allied with the English to effect the ruin and division of his native land. When at length the partisans of the House of Orleans, called Armagnacs, from the title of their principal leader, succeeded in obtaining possession of the government, the Chief of Penmynydd was declining so fast into the grave, that neither himself nor his son could endure the thought of a separation to precede the inevitable one approaching.

Such was the disinherited heir who, with his fleet-footed vassal, was now crossing a drawbridge which had not been

raised for years, and, in fact, had fallen from the ruined tower to which it once gave access. This conducted to a space formerly occupied by the central keep, but then by a flourishing self-planted wood of alders and birch; and thence to the second tower, which was not so much battered, and was occupied by the shrunken household of Penmynydd. Master and man entered a hall where a low fire burned in a chimney formed merely by an open recess in the wall, around which in mournful silence sat nearly all the serfs and domestics of the dying lord, unable in their grief and anxiety to attend to any of their usual occupations. Owen learned with mingled emotion and surprise from an old man covered with the scars of many a ghastly wound, yet who sobbed as he spoke, that the chief was sinking fast, but had commanded them so peremptorily to carry him into the open air on the summit of the tower that they had not dared to disobey.

And there Owen Tudor found his father, his stalwart but shrunken figure stretched on a kind of litter formed of wreathed branches and a straw mattress, and covered with a curiously-wrought counterpane of the arms and insignia of warriors and princes from whom he believed himself descended. In one of those freaks of impatience and irritation which mark the close of lingering maladies, the fancy entered his mind of causing himself to be conveyed to a point whence he could take a last survey of the lands which were once his own, and of the expanse of those mighty hills whose shadows were still sacred in the druidical and traditionary imagination of the Welsh, and amidst whose wild solitudes he had so vainly fought and bled for the liberty of his country. He lay with his eyes closed, ghastly pale in the early light of the morning, but with every feature knit with inward and devouring impatience; for the only anxiety which he expressed in the prospect of the unknown change about to pass over him was lest he should perish ere he made some communications to his son, of eminent importance to his welfare, and which he desired to impress upon him with the authority of a parent's last injunction. Two wolf-hounds of enormous stature, almost blind with age, squatted solemnly on their haunches on each side of the chieftain's litter, occasionally licking his cold hands, which lay lifelessly beside him, but looking on in general with a wistful, sorrowful expression, that showed how their sagacity was at once roused and baffled by the strange circumstances of the scene. Every thing and person around the chieftain seemed aged and decayed as the fortunes of his

house. A very old monk, whose long white beard and dark robe gave him much the aspect of an ancient Druid, sat on one corner of the couch, murmuring prayers from his breviary, and with the sacred chalice beside him from which he had just administered the last rites of Catholic Christianity. Iolch Dhu, or the black, as the bard of Penmynydd was called from his dark complexion, with a number of the chieftain's personal servitors, knelt behind his couch; and Owen's foster-mother, herself in the last stage of human existence, but whose benevolent and affectionate expression of countenance wrinkles could not destroy, was assiduously propping his head, and recalling him from the deep faintness into which he sunk at intervals by wetting his lips with the spongy bark of some tree steeped in water and vinegar. These services, indeed, were rewarded only with muttered reprimands, as if they were acts of needless officiousness; but the old woman ceased not to render them, while the tears which streamed down her withered cheeks attested the grief with which she witnessed the close of her patron's career. But they streamed faster and faster when the step of Owen was heard, and she saw how the chieftain roused himself at the sound, and looked strainingly forward through the mists of death which hung on his sight.

"Owen, thou art here, but I do not yet clearly behold thee," he said, raising himself with the support of his attendants and stretching his hands, as the young man knelt beside his couch in silent awe and grief. "Thou art here, for my soul brightens amidst the darkness, and anon I shall see all things again which have faded around me as when clouds gather round a hunter in a vale of waters! Ay, yonder are the sacred snows once more on whose summits the spirits of our fathers await me!" he continued, gazing stedfastly towards the white masses of Snowdon, now looming distinctly into day, "Owen, I have not disgraced their name in battle —no foe has ever seen the back of the son of Llewellyn ap Iorwerth. And, therefore, I would have thee bury me upright in my grave at Llanvaes, with my face to the east, that even when the trumpet of judgment sounds I may rise with a look of defiance towards the land of our enemies. This is no dreamy dotage of perishing age; for, when I was struck with the Saxon spear in the pass of the Eagle's Stairs, I prayed of Glendower to bury me thus if I died, and he swore it. I was a man then, but a child of the feeble might grapple with me now!"

This strength of the ruling passion in death did not at all surprise the heir of Penmynydd. He soothed the chieftain's agitation by tearful assurances of compliance, and gently reproached the attendants with bringing him to so high and exposed a spot in his state of weakness and exhaustion.

"What say'st thou, son? I am their lord yet, and which of them would dare to disobey me?" said the chieftain, with much of his characteristic vehemence and irritability. "I bade them bring me hither; and do they not drink my mead? Alas, poor souls, with but little meat or meal to need the draught! Owen, blame them not: thou art my son; but, until I am dust, they owe obedience to none but me! Or have I transferred to thee the golden belt with which Glendower confirmed me lord of all the land that I could see from the highest tower of my castle? But that the accursed Plantagenet tossed into the air like the nest of some paltry wren from the sling of a boy! Where art thou, my son, for I see all things now but thy beautiful face, which is pleasanter in my sight than even the memory of thy fair mother's, when it comes back smiling like the moon through the mists of years?"

Owen uncovered his features from the folds of the mantle in which he had enveloped it to conceal a natural burst of sorrow, and the dying chieftain gazed stedfastly, and with a beam of pleasure breaking over his own, at its noble lineaments.

"Let not the Fairy Queen gaze at thee in the woods, or she will woo thee to her halls in the golden sunset!" he said, with a deep sigh. "Thus hath it already chanced with one of our race, or Iolch Dhu sings not the legend truly—and thou art the fairest and the noblest to look upon that ever our tree hath blossomed withal! But I should speak on other matter—for methinks I have not long to speak on any! I have not hanged your Saxon leech, Owen, because he had your summons hither; but I have sent him faster home than ever he came, though his will were as good as the arrow's to its mark! The good priest has washed my soul as white as the lambs in shearing time—and I have drained the parting cup of the long journey! . . What remains?—Nay, I have much to say!—Let all depart but the monk and the bard, and the aged mother of the orphan, and pray for my good speed: and let the bard sing the song of our descent from the son of Uther! He remembers the things of the past, but he is as the future shall be—he forgets those of yes-

terday, which no glories mark as they speed along in the track of ages."

Owen had often listened with pride, but, truth to say, at times with weariness, to the long metrical genealogy of his race, which the bard recited whenever called upon; but always, by duty of his place, on occasions of festival and display. Of course his sole object, under the circumstances of the time, was to afford his father any possible satisfaction, and in a faltering voice he repeated the command to the bard. Iolch Dhu needed a repetition of the words ere he could subdue his own voice to the necessary steadiness; and he then commenced in the chanting recitative employed by the bards on these heraldic exercitations, but reversing the plan of modern genealogists, by ascending the stream instead of tracing its progress downward from its royal source.

Perhaps an Anglo-Norman herald might not have disputed the descent of the Tudors from the sovereigns of Wales—from the mighty Llewellyn ap Iorwerth in the thirteenth century, and the victorious Owen Gwynedd in the twelfth. But Geffrey of Monmouth himself would have hesitated at the exact deduction of the line from the blood of the great institutor of the Round Table. Not so the dying chieftain nor his youthful heir, solemn and mournful as the thoughts might be that mingled with the latter's cogitations. Ancestral pride was a passion rather than a feeling, even among the common people of Wales, and it may be imagined with what vehemence it glowed in the convictions of men who believed themselves descended from the most illustrious of their country's heroes and princes. With Owen, in whom all the hopes and possible glories of his line seemed to concentrate, it was a kind of fanatic religion, and he would sooner have forgiven a personal injury or insult than the least slur of doubt thrown on the splendours of his genealogy. Aspiring and visionary by temperament, the vague hopes with which so glorious a past lighted the future, and which his father and all around him encouraged by intimations of marvels and prophecies attending his birth of no ordinary significance, were become the brightest and most alluring of the illusions which danced before him in the brilliant colours lent by youth and inexperience.

Iolch Dhu waxed warm and enthusiastic as he proceeded, and to those who could have read the philosophy of the scene, seldom was there presented a more striking example of the mingled grandeur and vanity of human nature than in such a

funeral chant. But even the aged monk listened with the interest and respect which only a Welshman could feel in the pronunciation of so long a string of names; and Owen bared his noble brow as if the song was an evocation which would summon the royal and mighty dead around them. The bard concluded with a characteristic lament, into which his excitement seemed to glide naturally, as a high sweeping wind sinks into a mournful base at its close. Bewailing that the branch should outlive the tree—the bard his generous lord; he declared himself only consoled by the certainty that Penmynydd would be succeeded by a son worthy to inherit so glorious and untarnished a name. He himself was aged as the pine at the foot of the Moel y Don, or as the eagle on the crags of Snowdon, when a hundred winters have whitened its wings. He could not hope to witness the future glories of the race of his benefactors, and no voice would remain after him to sing them. His son was with the tuneful of other days, and his son's son was fit only to hammer red iron into shapes, or to carry the spear of some Saxon lord in battle. Rhys ap Goronwy ap Iolch Dhu, and a hundred others "aps," if we had time to enumerate them, was the object of this reproach, and hung his head. But he raised it to mutter passionately, when the bard concluded, "Rhys ap Goronwy will serve no Saxon lord; but he will run at ap Tudor's stirrup until he holds it for a prince to alight!"

"Well hast thou spoken, son of Goronwy! Though I bade all depart but the bard and the monk," said the chieftain, "thy faith shall give thee standing-place in our counsels. And now listen, for strength is given to me only to speak the words which are now flapping their wings in my soul for utterance, dark as ravens over a field of the slain! Let me speak, and then be silent for ever."

"Say not so, my father! the gold of your offering fell with a favourable and most musical chink on the stones of St. Elian's confessional, when I knelt and put it through the listening stone," said Owen, with an irrepressible flow of tears.

"It avails nothing; my corpse-lights have gleamed over Snowdon, and I myself beheld the shadows crossing the sea to Llanvaes," replied the chieftain; and the belief that such a spectacle always heralded the departure of a descendant of the royal blood of the Cymbri was too deeply an article of family pride and superstition not to be accepted as a certain assurance of the menaced event.

"Yea, Owen, thou wilt soon be the last,—and may the prophecy of the great Glendower also prove true!—mayst thou be the most renowned and glorious of all thy race!" continued the Lord of Penmynydd.—"Good friar, give me the holy casket in which are inclosed the words of power—which I charge thee on thy life, Owen, and as thy father's blessing shall rest upon thee, to endeavour by every means and at every risk to fulfil; for never, until then, shall the sun go down in peace and glory on the land of the Cymbri!"

While the chieftain spoke, he impatiently extended his hand to take the object of his request from the monk, who gave it with all possible speed from an inner fold of his habit. A small iron casket appeared, secured by a soldering of lead, in the form of a cross, which it required the services of Rhys ap Goronwy to open. The chieftain's tremulous fingers then drew forth an ornament which appeared like a large hen's egg of frosted silver, hanging by a massive chain of the same metal wide enough to compass a man's neck. The egg was a mystic symbol among the Druids, to which tradition preserved some reverence; and it was said that, in rude imitation of the customs of more civilized sovereignties, Glendower had founded a chivalric order, of which it was the badge. Owen imagined that his father had received this egg on his admittance into the fraternity, and was about to transfer it to himself; but he was surprised to see that, by the application of some slight pressure, a spring suddenly separated the silver shell in halves, and revealed a piece of parchment carefully folded within. The monk spread it open with evident interest, and a square of about a hand's breadth appeared, covered with lines and emblazoned figures of the signs of the zodiac. Some verses in a neat small hand filled up all the margins, and no doubt contained the explanation of the mysterious illumination thus carefully lodged. The Lord of Penmynydd desired the monk to raise it to his lips, and he kissed the writing with great reverence.

"Glendower himself penned these words, and drew the horoscope on this parchment!—Glendower, to whom the stars spoke as they wandered over the skies of the night!" he said, in a tone which had lost all its feebleness. "Owen, the horoscope is thine! I have hitherto concealed it, lest danger should come upon thee from the jealous fears of the Saxon; but death should not carry his secrets with him, lest his rest be disturbed to return and communicate them!—What did I say?—The hero was wandering amidst the crags of Snowdon,

like the eagle when he watches for the moment of his downward sweep! I was with him; the gleam of our swords was ever as two streams of lightning that strike the forest together! Thy mother fled from the brands of the destroyer, and thou wert born in the cavern of night, wherein we rested our weary heads on pillows of stone. Glendower watched the stars at the moment of thy birth, and drew the planetary signs, for in all magic he was skilful as Merlin Emrys himself. He was not childless then—the Plantagenet had not met his sons in battle, and the blood was yet warm in the veins of their youth,—yet mark what he read in the heavens of thee, and concealed not from me, thy father!"

The monk, who understood his patron's glance, and was also aware that he could not read, took the horoscope, and, in a voice tremulous with age and emotion, read some Welsh verses, whose abrupt and yet musical passages are but ill imitated in the subjoined translation.

Glendower's Prophecy.

"Arthur's blood, of Tudor's line,
Royal stars above thee shine,
If the weaver work their rays
In a woof of answering blaze!—
Brave and haughty shalt thou be,
Eloquent—fierce as liberty!
The wilful harp shall laugh or weep
Beneath thy fingers' mastering sweep;
Yet beware the sons of song,
Lest thou do or suffer wrong!
Beware when, in the sultry Scales,
The Lion paws or Virgo pales!
Else! fear not, though Snowdon leap,
And scythes of lightning red corn reap;
Though Danger, with his gore-clumped hair,
Cross all thy paths, do thou but dare;
Thou hast but to dare, to do!
Only where thou weddest, woo!
Woo no daughter but a King's,
Sweetly though the Mermaid sings,
And sons of Kings thy sons shall be,
Kings of the waves and freer free!"

"Hearest thou, Owen! son of Arthur! Thy sons shall be the sons of kings, and kings!" said the dying chieftain, with an enthusiasm which revived all his sinking powers. "Kings

of men more free than the waves!—What should that mean, but that thou shalt inherit the prophecies of our race, redeem our land from slavery, and wreathe thy brows with the diadem which our fathers wore, or the bard lies!—and who will speak such sacrilege?"

"And is not the prophecy of the mighty one fulfilled thus far?" exclaimed Iolch Dhu, taking up the strain with echoing frenzy. "Do not thy lips distil honey on the listener's ear?—doth not the harp make subtler music under thy hand than when the winds play on it as it hangs in some lonely hall? What hast thou dared and not done, and what hast thou not dared? When thou wert in thy twelfth autumn, did we not seek thee with wailing and lamentations amid the ghastly caverns of the Blue Valley, and didst thou not meet us laughing with the slain wolf on thy shoulder?"

"And for the matter concerning the Scales and the Lion, and the sign of Virgo, it is thus construed," said the monk, with a philosophical gravity which was calculated to add the authority of science to this poetical rhapsody: "Forasmuch as Leo is in the ascendency from the twenty-second of July to the twenty-first of August, and Virgo from the twenty-second of August to the twenty-first of September, during these months—which methinks are the hottest of the year—it behoves thee, son, to be well on thy guard against fevers and the like diseases which assail men's bodies at those seasons. At least so I read it, and I studied in Paris on the same bench with Maître Nicholas Flamel, who they say hath since discovered most marvellous secrets!"

"How that may be, I know not—yet methinks it cannot be warlike assault or open danger that my son needs fear at any season, since his horoscope bids him only dare, to do!" said the chieftain. "And, Owen, well I know how brightly pure, though impetuous as the torrent of the Tull Dhu, are thy passions. Therefore I fear not that thou shouldst woo where thou shouldst not or mightst not wed! And, if thou art to woo the daughter of a king, a king shalt thou be!—for doth the eagle of the mountain pair with the hedge cuckoo? Once I thought as did the great Glendower himself, when he would have betrothed thee in the cradle to his son's sole daughter, Gwyneth, that it was by alliance that thy children should become kings and rule over Wales set free by our blood! But Gwyneth is with the blossoms of spring when the leaves of autumn strew the ground—and the race of Glendower have forgotten that the blood of heroes flows

in their veins. Once . . . but now! look round and see of what a fair inheritance Henry of Monmouth, that falsely pretends to inherit our prophecies, has robbed thee! The flight of thine eyes, which are as the eagle's in the sunrise, once could not have passed our bounds! Now may a child crawl from its nurse's arms over them, and never look round for help! And wilt thou suffer all with the patience of the muttering serf when his lord rebukes him with the flat of the spear?—or strive to rend back the inheritance of Arthur from the grasp of the stranger, and therewith redeem thy land, avenge thy father's grave, and wreathe thy brow with the diadem which prophecies extend to thee from the darkness of time?"

"What man may do, I will do! But what is one rower against the stream of the tide?" said Owen, yet with a kindling eye and throbbing heart.

"If fate pulls the oar with him, what is the tide against one rower?" returned the Chief of Penmynydd. "Why shouldst thou despair? Are our mountains levelled, and the caves of our safety familiar to the Saxon as to the wild goat? In what doth Henry of England excel thee? Is the blood of Plantagenet more royal than that of the sons of Arthur? If he wears a crown from his usurping sire, have the children of York forgotten that it is of right their own, and that our Welsh blood was poured to make it so in very deed? In person can he boast himself more fair and princely for the people to gaze upon than the flowering Oak of Penmynydd? Wherefore should thy manly and unsullied youth stand blushing in the presence of the dissolute Henry, whose name was once as common as arithmetic on tapsters' lips?"

"But, father, it is now the very trumpet-note of fame! Ask of all the wanderers who return among us, and their first word is his praise!" said Owen, with a degree of bitterness and regret mingled with the generosity of the avowal. "Conqueror of France, glory of chivalry, most renowned and kingly knight!—well doth he deserve that men should speak only of him!"

"Traitors are they all, who glorify him to make their own shame the less in serving him!" returned the chieftain. "And dost thou, Owen, echo the praise of the ravager who laid the home of our fathers waste, in battle with whom so many of our blood have fallen that we have no longer tears to shed over the slain! France is not conquered —nor are we! The field of Agincourt must be many tim-

refought ere she kneel in the dust to lay her crown at England's feet! And among us the ashes of Glendower are not extinguished—they glow in silence! And this I would have thee tell to France, and—but let the counsel of seventy winters speak with whom I have ever found wisdom a dweller! Friar Ambrosius, tell my son thy thought—for I am exhaust."

"It is thus," said the ancient monk, the zeal of the patriot and partisan illuminating his pale and withered countenance, "I have laboured so earnestly to teach thy fluent lips the language of France, that thou mightst hold communion with her chiefs without the need of a cold interceder! I would have thee hasten thither now, to remind them that in the days of this conqueror's father they turned back the sword of England from their own breasts by striking her in the side with the Welsh hook! In far heavier jeopardy stands France now—at a desperation which must needs catch at straws!"

"And we offer her a branch of the oak which, though stripped of all its leaves, is the oak of a thousand years of storms!" exclaimed the bard. "Bid them remember the days of Owen Glendower, when the steel hauberks of France and the light mail of our warriors glittered in the same line of spears—and let the gleam return to our mountains, which will gladly echo to the unchanged name of his godson for a battle-cry!"

"Yet!—who answers a distant shriek when robbers throng around himself?" said Owen. "And, father, hast thou forgotten how times are changed—how many kindred breasts will stand arrayed against our spears?"

"So much the better, for traitors' hearts have ever beaten in such!" returned the chieftain, vehemently.

"Nay, son, so much the better—for that the sons of Cambria have thus learned the discipline which vanquished us, since nothing else we lacked either of valour or holy prayers or powerful saints!" replied the monk. "And this, Owen, among other matters mayst thou plead to France, for even the son of the traitor Gam, who battles beneath the Saxon's standard, has taught her of how great import it were to withdraw our eager blood from the tramp of her enemies' advance!"

"But what is Owen Tudor when his foot is off the dark soil of his fathers' graves? who will lend ear to his words?" said Owen, who, young as he was, in all probability possessed more knowledge of the real state of things than any one of

the three old men before him, living in great measure among the recollections of a bygone world.

"He is a stray eaglet of Snowdon!—ye shall know him by his sharp beak and his pounce on his prey!" exclaimed the enthusiastic bard.

"Yea, if it might be thus—if when the chiefs of France inquire, on some glorious field, 'Who is he?' I could stand forth and plead for my country with the streaming sword of victory in my hand—gladly would I hasten to that noblest land of chivalry, and try what ore the last runnings of our blood might yield!" returned Owen, all his martial and romantic visions stirring into splendid activity in his imagination with the words. "Often would I have prayed my sire to suffer me to join in the battles of some far land, since we had none among ourselves, but that I feared to vex his ear with what might seem complaint, and to leave his age alone! Fain would I have proved to the vaunting chivalry of England that our Welsh sinews are formed of as tough yew as their own, and that we can raise our arms to strike under as heavy weight of steel as ever Saxon or Norman bore!"

"Yea! and which of the honeysuckle-smelling coxcombs of the Marches could overthrow the son of Penmynydd, even with the Saxon arms?" exclaimed the bard. "Who of all the knighthood that have returned among us to boast of their shame in the service of the stranger, can vault lighter into his saddle in armour, or dash the heart featlier from the breast of the Saracen dangling from an apple-tree, as he passes wind-borne on the rapid steed?"

"These are the glories of a boy!—To strike the quintain is even as hardy an exploit as to pluck the thistle's beard in a waste!" returned Owen, colouring. "Are these the deeds, O bard! which thou wouldst gladly chant of my father's son, in a hall where chiefs and fair women listen?—But, father," he continued, with a gush of tears, "promise to live to welcome me home—for what is glory, if none of our love remain to rejoice with us in the harvest of fame?—and I will go forth like the rush of the wind through a narrow valley, that returns at sunset clad in brightness and peace!"

"I cannot live, Owen!—all skill fails me; even the hissing iron of Ambrosius stanches not the gushing wound!" said the chieftain, with an emphatic glance at the discoloured bandages of his limbs. "My minutes are like the last drops in an overturned goblet; they linger, but they must fall! Among my fathers I must rejoice in thy fame, when the

shouts of battle send thy name thundering up to heaven, whither, I trust, I am summoned! Forget nought of what we have to avenge on the wassailer of England, who is now as drunk with blood as ever he was with wine! Look how at his very name my wound wells gore, as if a murderer were nigh the corpse of his secret revenge! Promise me this, and I will tell Glendower, when he rushes on his stormy cloud to meet me, that I have left an avenger in the land!"

"Promise it, grandson of Llewellyn of the Hill of the Wave of Blood!" exclaimed the bard—"promise it, and, old as I am, I will once more take my seat in the Gathering of the Bards, and bid them whisper the Prophecy of Glendower to the woods and streams, to the voices of the mountains, that the torrents may repeat it in our loneliest glens, and when the deliverer comes he may find the spears taken from their hiding-places in the rocks! I will bid them report that in the south, beyond the waves, a fiery hope arises for Cambria, and the dullest of our peasants will expect rescue from Gaul!"

"Do nothing rashly, bard!" returned the monk, whose zeal was more tempered by discretion; "without aid from France, blood were poured as uselessly as water on the sands: so look that thou do not prove the need of Glendower's warning, when he bade his godson beware of the sons of song, for in truth their rash counsels did oft bewray himself into passes of mad hazard, and ruined him at last!"

"Yet perished he gloriously! When did the counsels of monks give a noble death to him who listened to them?—what hero owes to them his renown?" returned the indignant bard; when he was stopped by a gesture of his dying lord, who raised himself with an effort, of which he could scarcely be thought capable, on his elbow.

"Peace, peace!—let me look around me once more, and then to my rest!" he said, in a faint tone, while Owen propped him with his vigorous young strength, and hung over him half blinded with tears. "Bard, restore the writing of the prophecy to its secret cell, and let me twine the chain like the holy berries of the misletoe on the oak of Penmynydd, whose acorns are a forest!"

Father Ambrosius hurriedly obeyed, for he observed a change come over the face of the chieftain. But the Lord of Penmynydd mustered strength sufficient for the last effort of paternal love. With his own hands he fastened the silver collar round Owen's neck—gazed for an instant with deep

and yearning tenderness in the beautiful countenance of the youth—murmured something which seemed like a blessing—and sunk back on his couch. But, though evidently exhausted, his eyes closed not. The shattered battlement, directly in front, admitted a wide view of the towering mountains on the opposite shores of the straits, and a sudden break of sunshine among the mists which enveloped their summits shone down the vast sides of Snowdon, with that peculiar red glow which ancient superstition ascribed to the blood with which its rocks were so often deluged. To point emphatically at this tragic radiance was the last movement of the chieftain of Penmynydd, as he sunk back in his son's arms, and, heaving a sigh of exhaustion rather than of pain, resigned his spirit in an ineffectual attempt to return the kiss which filial love and reverence pressed on his livid brow.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAMP OF HENRY V.

It was some months after the death of the Chief of Penmynydd, in the beginning of spring, when his heir departed on the singular and dangerous mission with which he was charged to France.

Without military aid from that country, even Owen perceived the impossibility of raising his own in revolt against the English sway, or at all events of sustaining the struggle which must ensue. The spirit of the people was cowed by recent and severe chastisements, nor was it likely, unless encouraged by some powerful assistance, that the Welsh chiefs would again venture into a contest in which they had suffered already such extremities of humiliation and loss. It was, therefore, with a view to obtain armed assistance from the new government of France that Owen resolved to proceed to Paris.

He took his departure with all possible secrecy, with only one attendant, in a barque which was little better than an open fishing-boat, belonging to the industrious natives of the coast of Normandy, who did the Welsh the favour to sweep their sea of riches which they had neither the skill nor inclination to obtain for themselves. This single attendant was Rhys ap Goronwy, the grandson of the bard, whose shrewdness and fidelity recommended him to the post. He had

other qualities likely to prove of service in such an expedition. His swiftness we have commemorated, and, as he knew no language but his own wild mountain guttural, it was not possible for him to blab the secrets of the expedition in France. He was skilled in the manufacture and use of arms—at least of the arms used by his countrymen—for Rhys inherited so little of the poetical genius of his ancestors, that Iolch Dhu was obliged at last to rejoice that his grandson applied himself to one of the three liberal sciences among the Welsh, and became a smith.

Necessity, as well as prudence, dictated this scantiness of retinue to the heir of the Tudors. The funeral rites of his father were performed at an expense which testified rather to his own attachment to old customs and pride than to his prudence. The great feast with which it was celebrated, at which half the island was present, contributed to the impoverishment of his already very limited exchequer; so that, when Owen's dejection permitted him to take notice of his position, he found that, in addition to his patriotic and politic reasons, he was in a condition which made the sword of a soldier of fortune almost his only chance of winning a livelihood as a gentleman, according to the ideas of the age on the proper occupations of one.

But, ambitious and superstitious by nature and education, Owen would have needed little other incentive than the magnificence of his horoscope to venture on any enterprise, however rash. The renown of the heroic Magus who had drawn it was not less fixed as a sage deep in all weird science than as a warrior and leader, and the vague grandeur of the destinies assigned to him was more attractive to the poetical imagination of Owen Tudor than perhaps any explicit assurances could have been. The dangers with which he was threatened on their attainment were enveloped in equal mystery, or offered themselves in such strange typical forms, that they were rather allurements than terrors to the curiosity and daring of his youth, athirst for action and excitement.

Nor was the hope of French aid so doubtful to him as it might have seemed to a less ardent politician, or one better acquainted with the state of the country whence assistance was to be sought. To give the English monarchs employment at home had always been a favourite policy with the French. The exploits of Glendower and his countrymen were sufficiently recent to inspire hopes as to the results of a new attempt at reviving the flames of war in so dangerous a propinquity.

The expediency of effecting so powerful a diversion as Wales had not unfrequently proved was obvious—and the desperate condition of France herself was but imperfectly understood in the remote regions overlooked by Snowdon. The uproar of her civil broils reached its valleys too confusedly to be appreciated in all their ruinous consequences. Moreover, the temporary exhaustion of the Burgundian faction produced the appearance of a lull in the storm, and, in the opinion of all men not inflamed by the madness of civil hatred, it seemed impossible but that the progress of an enemy so redoubtable as the victor of Agincourt must produce a reconciliation and union even between factions so envenomed as those of Orleans and Burgundy.

But, unsustained by friends or alliance of any sort, Owen felt it was only by personal merit that he could hope to introduce himself to the notice of the rulers of France. Another motive, perhaps more powerful than all these put together, influenced the determination which he took to offer his sword as a preliminary and introduction to the government of the Constable d'Armagnac, who then exercised its functions in virtue of the possession of the king's person and of the capital of France. He burned with desire to remove the stigma of barbarism from his country and lineage—to signalize himself in those chivalrous exploits which alone in that age rendered men glorious in the eyes of their fellows. The wild renown of his ancestors was no longer of a kind to satisfy the aspirations of the diligent peruser of Father Ambrose's treasury of martial romance. The brilliant adventures of the knights of King Arthur were so interwoven with descriptions of courts and the pomps of civilized grandeur, that the actuality around him seemed cold and colourless as the common light of day in the eyes of one quitting the emblazoned glories of a Gothic cathedral. Even the beauty of his fair country women, so justly celebrated by the Welsh bards, did not realize the splendid ideal which the courtly minstrelsy of France inspired, including so many adjuncts of glittering accomplishments and ornaments not as yet to be found among the innocent loveliness of the Cambrian wilds. Owen longed to behold those gorgeous scenes of pomp and pleasure which old renown and the reports of his dazzled countrymen taught him to expect in the court of France. These legends were chiefly the reports of travellers, or rather of emissaries, who visited it in the time of Glendower, when the magnificent and profligate Isabeau de Bavière queened it at the height of her power and pride, and when, indeed,

the palaces of France were magic scenes of splendour and festivity.

Owen was aware that more skill than he possessed in the practice of the arms of chivalry was essential to his success as a warrior on any arena but the fastnesses of his native land. Still, the great strength and agility which he united with all the beauty of his person promised to make the task a light one, and France offered a wide school of warfare. He was already perfectly acquainted with the use of the formidable weapons in vogue in his own land, and he was now at liberty to do as he pleased, with the additional spur upon his inclinations of a grand motive and the dying injunctions of his father. The impression of the first deep grief of his life wore off, and those early visions revived in all their rich colouring and attraction. Every petty annoyance of poverty, forced upon his proud nature by the new circumstances of his position, was an incentive to exertion. All combined to deepen the feelings which inspired hatred of Henry of England, and a thirst of revenge, into the almost landless heir of the Tudors.

One advantage, however, Owen could not deny he gained from the peaceful and submissive habits into which his countrymen had fallen. A merchant of Chester lent him the money necessary to purchase accoutrements for his enterprise, on the security of the little property which remained to his house, for which any quantity of Welsh land would formerly have been thought a very precarious pledge. The slender revenues which this mortgage reserved, ill as he could dispense with it, Owen left for the subsistence of his foster-mother, the aged bard, and maimed serfs who remained in his ancestral towers, like withered weeds on a ruin.

The young adventurer husbanded his resources with a care and skill which only necessity teaches; and yet there was something of a lofty and generous pride in the thrift which he exercised in the array of his person, and that of his attendant, Rhys ap Goronwy. The modestest esquire-at-arms, who had not yet achieved the glory of knighthood, and was unconscious of any claims to the distinction, could not have taken his first field with less pretence than the descendant of Arthur. A blank shield and a crestless helmet most certainly did not announce the far-descended Welsh chieftain, though they might declare to the sagacious herald their owner's resolve to acquire a renown strictly personal. The fashionable armourers of the time would have smiled at the antique workmanship of the shirt of mail and greaves in which Owen

sheathed his limbs, but which was the masterpiece of Rhys ap Goronwy. In the foreign land to which he was wending, Owen could not expect that his mantle and surcoat of snowy wool would be recognized as the peculiar garb of a chieftain, which they were considered in Wales; and, excepting his silver chain and the precious egg containing his horoscope, he wore no ornament denoting rank or wealth.

Thus poorly attended and provided, Owen landed in safety in Cherbourg, the only sea-coast town of Normandy which had not yet fallen into the power of the English. The news which he heard of their progress in the interior of the province put a daring thought into the young adventurer's head, which he executed still more rashly.

The King of England and a portion of his army, he learned, were engaged in the siege of St. Lo, an important town in that part of Lower Normandy distinguished by the name of the Bocage. Owen determined to proceed to the neighbourhood of this encampment, and make his first essay in arms against such of the English chivalry as he could encounter. In the audacity of his youthful courage, he doubted not to overcome some knight, whom he could make the bearer of his defiance to the English king. The custom of repudiating allegiance to the sovereign almost at pleasure was a privilege of the feudal system which, under active and powerful princes such as Henry V., was not always exercised with impunity; and so great and lasting was the terror which attached to the conqueror's name among the Welsh, that, with all his rebellious disdain, Owen was influenced by it so far as not to desire to come under his personal notice.

St. Lo is situated on the river Vire, the rapid course of whose waters fits it for various purposes of manufacture, for which it was famous even in the fifteenth century. Ascending the narrow but picturesque shores, whose gulfy valleys reminded him of his own land, Owen was struck with the great number of large mills, whose wheels the obedient waters kept in continual whirl. At first he thought they were intended to grind corn, but he soon observed traces of another kind of industry, and perceived that it was in these valleys they dyed the rich cloths, or bleached the snowy linens, which the unskilful English were compelled to send either to Flanders or Normandy for the purpose.

It was the month of April; the large green corn waved in the depths of every valley waist-deep; the orchards and vineyards which hung on every hill and steep were in full

and fragrant blossom, when Owen Tudor sought a spot among the windings of the Vire suitable to the purpose he had formed. Mounted on a steed, whose qualities were well described in his name of Wildfire, and arrayed in the light panoply of mail we have mentioned, which was almost entirely superseded by plate armour among the civilized chivalry of Europe, Owen took up a position which, commanding the main ford of the river between St. Lo and the valleys of the Bocage, seemed likely to afford him the opportunities he sought. It was probable that knights engaged in various military duties would frequently cross the stream to and from the besiegers' camp, and Owen took up his station at a point since called Pont des Vaux (or Bridge of the Valleys), at the confluence of the rivers Vire and Virène, the rocky channels of which meet there in the form of a cross.

In front, the view was scarcely bounded save by the waves of the Channel; on either hand stretched the craggy windings of the Virène; and, from behind, the Vire poured its rapid waters to a junction. To the right, St. Lo was plainly visible in the distance, circled in by the white tents of the besiegers, and waving like a flowery field of ripe corn with innumerable standards and pennons.

A wood descended almost to the ford, and beneath its boughs, and partly of the living branches and foliage, Rhys fashioned two pleasant huts, as lodgment for himself and his lord. They arrived towards nightfall, but the active squire completed his preparations before the dark was fairly set in, and a Welsh encampment on a small scale—such as the walls of Chester often saw pitched with dismay—arose on the shores of the Vire.

The customs of chivalry were as yet changed but little by the invention of gunpowder, the powers of which were scarcely understood and but very awkwardly put in requisition. A century was to elapse ere Ariosto justly anathematized it as the cause of the decline of all true valour and knightly prowess; another, ere the master of grave mirth arose, very possibly to make the achievements which we should else detail, with the certainty of exciting the admiration of all lovers of the noble and gentle science of giving and taking blows, of doubtful effect.

The day after after his arrival Owen took up his station, equipped in his barbaric armour, spear in hand, a broad axe gleaming on his thigh, the strong leather noose, with which he had often captured and retained the fiercest bulls, hanging

at his saddle bow, and the broad curved falchion, more like a scythe than a sword, dreaded by the Saxons under the name of the Welsh hook, at his girdle. He took post on the verge of the Vire, in the middle of the pathway leading from the ford. A lofty oak shadowed the rapid waters, on which he hung his shield, as a challenge to any passer by. His only defence against the glare and heat of the sun was his surcoat of white wool, which began to show shagged and travel-stained, insomuch that Rhys intimated his intention of stripping the first sheep he encountered, and bleaching its fleece to make a new one: a project which he would infallibly have executed but for the stern prohibition of his master, who informed him that he did not come as an enemy, but as a protector, to the countries owing allegiance to the King of France. And thus accoutred Owen awaited the arrival of an antagonist with as much anxiety as we wiser moderns would avoid one.

During all the first day of his watch fortune seemed not at all inclined to aid him in his project. Not a single knight, nor even man-at-arms, made his appearance at the ford; and only a few peasants occasionally loitered and stared at the stranger, when they were at sufficient distance to do so without being called in question for presumption. A single pursuivant indeed crossed, who, by the devices on his coat, might be an attendant on the herald of some great baron. He also stared at the wild apprentice of chivalry, surveyed his blank shield on the tree, turned and stared again, and then pricked on his steed, with something of the rapidity of flight, over the ford. Owen cherished the hope that he would report what he had seen in the English camp, and that he should not languish much longer for an opponent.

Yet another day elapsed, and only two knights, coming in a contrary direction to St. Lo, crossed the stream, who, either pressed by business or apprehensive of encountering an unknown champion in the vicinity of so renowned a chivalry, went their way without touching his longing shield.

At last, wearied with his useless abode, Owen determined on the somewhat hazardous step of betaking himself to the English camp, and offering defiance in person to the chivalry there assembled. Hazardous, if he were discovered to be a Welshman, as, from the haughty character of Henry of England, it was not likely that he would suffer so daring an impeachment of his sovereignty if he knew that the challenger was one whom he would consider his subject. But as Rhys spoke no French, and Owen strictly charged him to utter no

Welsh, there seemed little danger of detection, and he determined to proceed to the camp before St. Lo.

Accordingly, on the third morning of his arrival at the fords of the Vire, Owen and his squire took the road toward the besieged town; and when he approached the camp he despatched Rhys forward with an epistle, which he had carefully worded accorded to the models which he well remembered in Father Ambrosius's golden record. It was addressed in general—"To the noble English chivalry assembled before St. Lo," and imported that the writer did utterly deny and challenge the pretensions of their king to the crown of France; in disproof of which, he would abide until sunset at the gates of their camp, to do battle in any manner, and with any number in succession, who might present themselves to maintain it. This epistle was signed, as Owen imagined or at least intended, with great modesty;—"The Maiden of Chivalry."

Rhys hastened forward with great satisfaction on his embassy, mounted on a little shaggy steed of Welsh breed, and which he seldom used excepting on occasions of state, preferring his own strong and rarely wearied limbs to those of any other animal whatsoever. Owen followed more leisurely, and as he went he could not but admire the exact order and discipline which appeared to reign throughout the camp. Master of the field as he was, Henry left nothing to chance. His camp before St. Lo was fenced in its whole circuit with timber sharpened at the tops, within which he conducted the operations of the siege, on one side of the town only. This precaution was not superfluous, as the number of the besiegers scarcely exceeded that of the besieged, the great masses of the English army being engaged in the blockade of the large towns, whence relief might otherwise have been attempted of those minor ones which Henry meanwhile captured almost at pleasure. Barriers guarded by troops of archers defended every entrance to the encampment; and at one of these Owen halted to await his messenger's return.

Peering curiously over the enclosure, Owen perceived a street of tents radiating with others from all parts of the camp into a circular space, one side of which was open towards the town. A deep trench thrown into a high mound was in process of formation by the besiegers in this direction, raised on which, Owen for the first time beheld pieces of great ordnance. Rude of shape as they were, and scarcely raised above the mound in their awkward carriages, the mountaineer gazed with awe at those black and ponderous machines, which

had so often scattered death and terror in the wild ranks of his country. For the first time he felt the beauty and power of discipline, when he beheld with what fearlessness and regularity band succeeded band in the dangerous labours of the trench, protected by masses of bowmen and men-at-arms who stood on raised platforms, and kept up continual discharges against the defenders of St. Lo, whenever they ventured to appear on the walls. This did not often happen: it almost seemed as if the besieged were panic-struck, and awaited passively the progress of toils which must end either in their surrender or destruction.

The centre of the open space was occupied by a tent which, with a beating heart, Owen conjectured must be that of the great Henry himself. It was of canvas as coarse as the covering of the meanest soldiery, but it was of unusual size, and was surmounted by a royal crown, and guarded by knights, apparently of rank by the magnificence of their armour, two of whom bore the standards of England and of France, crossed so as to make a kind of pointed archway over the entrance. A level space of green turf surrounded the tent, beyond which were arranged, in perfect order and regularity, the canvas dwellings of the great barons and commanders who accompanied the king, each distinguished by its peculiar standard. Many of the tents were surmounted by the crests of their warlike occupants, among which were conspicuous the bear and ragged staff of the renowned Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and the purple lion of the heroic Sir John Talbot, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury, whose name was already the terror of France. Each of the leaders seemed thus to have his soldiery arranged in a canvas street, within sound of the blast of a trumpet from his own tent; while the king could issue his commands to them with scarcely a moment's delay. Heralds, knights, and men-at-arms in continual movement gave the whole camp an appearance of bustle and animation, without in the least disturbing the general effect of orderliness and discipline.

CHAPTER IV.

HENRY V.

At the end of the line of tents more immediately beneath Owen's observation was one which appeared to belong to some great baron, from the multitude of archers and spearmen in a peculiar livery grouped around it. Outwardly it was of the

strong, coarse materials which the king by his own example endeavoured to make general among his nobles, whose emulation in magnificence reduced the rich to poverty, and filled the poorer ones with rapacity and discontent. But the interior was hung with rich crimson taffetas, and furnished with a splendour and luxury of which until then Owen had no idea. The curtains were drawn back, and revealed a table covered with goblets and the materials of a banquet, at which sat or lounged, in various attitudes of repletion and drunkenness, a number of knights and squires, who seemed to have gorged their appetites at the too plentiful table of their lord. This personage sat at the door of the tent, a powerful figure, in complete armour, excepting the helmet and lance, which were borne behind his chair by two pages, whose rich garbs of star-sown scarlet and black velvet scarcely disguised that they were young girls of remarkable beauty in male apparel. He was amusing himself with playing at dice on a drum-head with a debauched-looking soldier, who had a very quaint physiognomy, dressed like an officer of one of the king's companies, and apparently, by the flag furled beside him, what was then called an ancient, or standard-bearer. The plunder of the cities of Normandy gave all men something to lose, and the Earl of Stafford—for the gamester was no less a personage—cared not from whom he won.

Otherwise the earl was possibly very devote, for at every cast of the dice he uttered a long string of ejaculations to our Lady, of almost all the places where she owned a shrine of any celebrity. "Be good to me this once, our sweet Lady Overies!—kind St. Mary of Boulogne!—our honoured Lady of Paris!—let me win this rogue's money, and I will make thee a much handsomer present at Candlemas than I intended!" he kept exclaiming, as he rattled the box.

"Why should virgins love thee?—The prey is mine!" said his antagonist, snatching up a heap of silver for which they were playing, as the dice settled on the drum. "Mighty earl, thou losest, for Pistol ever was the love of ladies, and heaven is not too high for beauty's beam!"

"Ha, false Lady! thou shalt have from me the poorest gift that ever was offered at thy shrine, that day we enter Paris!" said the earl, grinding his teeth. "By Whitebeard and Blackbeard!—by God and the fiend! I do never win against thee, guidon!—Thou wretched vassal and pillager, what wilt thou do with all that money thou hast won of me? Buy thee a French lordship?—By the mass, they are like to go cheap

enough anon!—But I will have thee hung the first hen-roost thou robbest in France, for thy gains to-day!—Go, go; take up the king's rag and begone; for if he finds his lieutenant of the ward at play with a common thief like thee!——But whom have we here?—A wild man of the woods?—Who has caught us this salvage?"

"His name is Orson; he cometh from afar," replied the ancient, with mock gravity. "I like his looks little. Yet the ballad says he is of lineage great, lost by his weeping mother in the woods, what time the——"

"Peace, idiot!—but so strange a varlet have I never seen till now," said Stafford. "Knave, who art thou?"

It was at this unpropitious moment that Rhys ap Goronwy halted with an archer, who, vaguely understanding that he came as a messenger, escorted him to the presence of the Earl of Stafford, who, it seems, enjoyed the command during the king's absence from the camp. This was probably not willingly confided to him by the prudent Henry; but the fierce rivalry of his nobles constrained him to adopt a course of rotation in the distinction of representing him, when engaged abroad in superintending the operations of the siege.

Unconscious of the impolite manner in which he was addressed, Rhys had by this time alighted from his steed, and, with the dignity and importance befitting the messenger of the son of Llewellyn the Great, delivered his epistle, standing bolt upright, and without uncovering.

"What impudent ragstaff is this?—Crook thy leg, fellow, or I will have half a dozen new joints broken in it!" said the haughty and irritated baron, staring at the messenger with his dark beetling brows bent together, and disdainfully tossing back the letter with his rough gauntleted hand, that struck like the kick of a horse.

The Welshman understood the earl's gesture and look; but, according to his mountain usages, a messenger was supposed so completely to represent his sender, that it was only to a personage of superior dignity to the latter that any mark of homage was due. It may be imagined if the son of Iolch Dhu considered a Saxon earl in such a light with regard to the heir of his native princes! Moreover, Rhys remembered, at the moment, that one of his mother's kinsfolk was hanged at Beaumaris Castle, only a few days before his departure, for stealing a single Saxon sheep. He therefore remained inflexibly upright, and abiding by his master's caution, without uttering a single word.

"The vassal understands me, by his audacious eyes,—what say'st thou, thief Pistol?" said the earl, with increasing wrath and surprise.

"Thief Pistol answers, he is your poor servant to command, but reads no Greek," replied the unruffled ancient. "Mayhap he understands only French of France, and your good lordship speaks to him in angry English."

"I will speak to him in no French!—How dare the rogues send their masters fellows who cannot parley French of England, so as we speak it?" returned the haughty baron. "Tell me, companion, who and whence thou art, or, by our sweet Lady of the Tears in Chepe! I will put thee to a college where thou shalt yell in thy mother-tongue, whate'er it be!"

Rhys again extended his epistle; but the earl, enraged at what he concluded to be obstinacy, dashed it out of his hand. "Now, by my father's grey beard, thou shalt not flout me thus!" he shouted with increasing wrath. "Let us see from whom he comes!—If it be from less than the brother of a king, we will teach him a touch of manners, which seems to have been neglected at the school which reared him!"

He motioned to one of the pages to lift the letter from the floor of the tent, and both with emulous zeal essayed to do it. But Rhys prevented them. The Welsh kerne's indignation at the treatment of so honourable a document got the better of his good sense, and, snatching up the cartel, he replaced it in the breast of his doublet, gibbering, in his native tongue, "The leaves of the oak are oak leaves!—why should the hog trample them?"

"Give me the paper, ribald!—what goose-gabble is this thou speakest?" said the earl, furiously. "By the white eyes of our Lady of Southwark! I will make thee glad enough to save me the trouble of spelling thy clerkship!—Set him on a wooden horse, Gileon of Hereford, until he speaks in some language we can understand, or until the crows pick his eyes out!"

"Espial of France! thou diest unless thou speakest!" said the ancient, compassionately. "Knowest thou what 'tis to stride the steed of wood?—Sharp-backed is he—and saddle hath he none but what on thine own shanks is borne!"

"Take him away!—he defies us!—'tis a French espial that feigns to understand no English that he may the more securely listen!" said the earl. "To the wooden horse with him, archers!"

"Speak him fairly lest he resist!—it is plain he understands not this at least," said the ancient. "Fair sir, will it please you go where you may at leisure rest—if you can?"

Deceived by the courteous manner of the standard-bearer, and imagining that he was to be simply dismissed for refusing to deliver his message, Rhys complied with what he understood to be the request made to him. He suffered two archers to take him by the arms, who instantly drew them back and pinioned them with such zeal and suddenness that he had no time to offer any resistance. Others of the men-at-arms, who desired no better sport, ran to bring the machine of military torture that was to be employed, and came rattling back with it on its wooden wheels, attended, like a fire-engine in a city, by all the rabble it passed on the way. In spite of the most strenuous resistance, but still without uttering a word, Rhys was mounted on the sharp back of this instrument, and secured by a ring which bound his ankles together in the most uncomfortable manner possible under the belly, which was prickly with nails.

The wooden horse was so called from its bearing some unshapely resemblance to that noble animal, and was intended to inflict both shame and torture on the unhappy being condemned to ride on its back. Mounted on a sharp-edged stake, which in motion cut like a saw, the culprit was drawn for a certain time, according to the degree of punishment assigned, through the camp, exposed to the derision and maltreatment of all who beheld him. And when it was generally understood that the present victim was a French spy, who feigned himself unable to speak in any intelligible dialect, the indignation of the soldiery was so vehemently excited, that before Rhys and his machine were in movement he was covered with bruises and mud. The Earl of Stafford, his knights, and his pages meanwhile laughed unintermittedly, until suddenly an armed apparition came as if borne by a whirlwind on the scene, and checked their mirth.

It was Owen Tudor. He had watched his messenger arrive at the tent and enter it, and was only just beginning to wonder wherefore he tarried so long, when he saw him hurled so precipitatedly forth, and mounted on a steed which was certainly inferior to his own, bad as that was. He heard the shouts of "a French spy, a French spy!" which resounded amidst the uproar of laughter, and, instantly concluding that Rhys's business was mistaken through his inability to communicate it, he dashed through the barriers without taking

the least heed of its defenders, and arrived at a gallop on the scene of action.

"Sirs! what mean ye!—treat ye courteous messengers thus discourteously?" he said, as he arrived, in French, but with great mildness, for, considering the gentle customs of chivalry, he could not think that this affront was knowingly put upon him.

"Is the blood of ap Tudor the blood of princes or of dogs, that they treat him thus?" yelled Rhys, in Welsh, not injudiciously identifying himself with his fiery lord.

"Marry, is this some jongleur's show, and have we here the Polack bear in armour?" said the Earl of Stafford, gazing an instant at Owen, and then bursting into a loud, hoarse peal of laughter.

"Discuss this question to us—for, if so, thou art the goodliest beast (to be one) that eyes of Pistol ever looked upon!" said the ancient.

"If ye speak thus, ye shall learn that I can hug till I make such ribald jester as ye are gape!" returned Owen, much irritated. "Release my varlet!—Wherefore have ye set him on this ill-conditioned steed? Is it on such backs as these that the English riders learn horsemanship?"

"He came to see our camp, and he shall see it!—and as his horse is something wearied and travel-stained, methinks, we have mounted him afresh," said Stafford, grimly smiling. "If ye like not to part company, Sir Salvage, you can go with him on his ride; and for the better speed, archers, let him gallop!"

"Recreant knight, if thou art one! I tell thee again he is my messenger, and even among savages a messenger is sacred!" shouted Owen.

"I am a knight and a baron too!" returned Stafford fiercely. "And who art thou, Frenchman, that thou comest like the statue of some old grandsire from a tomb in an abbey. Wert thou with Cœur de Lion in the first crusade in this suit of mail of thine?"

"Meet me with thy lance, and I will send thee to him to ask!" returned Owen, his vehement passions catching fire at the taunt.

"By St. George and his dragon! I will first hang this insolent messenger of thine, and then I will carve thee as meat for my hounds at leisure!" replied the ferocious earl. "Archers, take me yonder slave to the gibbet!—We will spare him his ride on the good horse, Cut-Tripe, for his master's sake!"

"Defend thy life, then, for it is in danger!" returned Owen, levelling his light spear at the earl's breast, who instantly snatched his shield from one of the pages so roughly that he overthrew him, and raising a mighty battle-axe which hung by a golden chain to his girdle, he stood on the defensive, shouting, "Ha, traitor!—treason! I am a fool! Archers, draw your bows and defend your lord."

"Release my varlet—I meant not to assail you thus!" replied Owen, dropping the point of his spear in some confusion. "I would use no advantage, sir earl; mount, and let us see which is the better man."

"Bring me my horse and lady-love Dowsabel!" shouted Stafford. "If thou art the best knight of all France, thus masked, I will not shirk thee."

"My lord, the king forbade any feat of arms to be performed in the camp without his express appointment and command!" said one of the older knights among the wassailers.

"The king never dreamed his lieutenant should be bearded thus in his own tent!—I were shamed else for ever, Sir Thomas Robesart!" returned Stafford.

"Listen, nevertheless, to counsel, sweet bully! Sir Thomas's head is mouldy with experience," said ancient Pistol.

"Bring me my horse!—ho, Dowsabel!" was the only reply which the earl deigned, and which he shouted in so loud a tone that the war-steed, which was stabled near the tent, uttered a shrill neigh as if it had heard a trumpet sound to battle.

Those present dared no longer hesitate in obedience to the commands of their terrible lord, and in the briefest possible space the mighty charger, arrayed in all his ponderous panoply, was brought to the door of Stafford's tent. Meanwhile the earl, uttering a strange volley of blasphemous curses, mingled with pious ejaculations, put on his helmet, and selected a massive lance from a bundle in the tent. He paid no attention whatever to the request which Owen made for the release of his esquire, who now began to suffer great pain, until, vaulting into his charger's high-peaked saddle, he yelled, "No!—he cannot be better anywhere to see the fray. And, that he may take the more interest in it, tell him in the Bohemian gibberish, which ye seem both to understand, that if I win the day he hangs for it; and, if I lose (which shall not easily chance), he shall ride the camp till sunset!"

"Pray for the doughty earl's success, friend bear!" said

Pistol; "'tis the better part for thee—to hang is nothing, but to die is hard! Therefore pray that it may be thy lot to be hanged at once."

Owen's indignation was excited to the highest, both by the arrogance of his antagonist, and the sufferings of his faithful follower. At the same time he was very well aware that his light mail and steed could scarcely withstand the shock of the English earl's ponderous weapons and panoply. The tournaments held by the English governors and chivalry at Caernarvon and Beaumaris, which he had occasionally witnessed, made him conscious that it would be difficult for him to cope with the skill acquired in those warlike schools. Neither did he see any reason why he should not use his own weapons according to the manner in which he had been taught to wield them, especially after the insulting reproaches cast upon him. Or it might be that these reasons only occurred to him afterwards as apologies, and it was by the instinct of habit that when the earl returned at a headlong speed with his lance in the rest from the course which according to custom he had taken, Owen, who never stirred, arrested the vindictive violence of his approach, from a distance, as if with a thunderbolt. He darted his spear with all the strength of his arm, so that its force almost equalled that of a ball, and, encountering the shield of Stafford, it pierced through it, dashed him senseless from his saddle to the ground, and, fixing in the earth, held his left arm pinioned to it by the shattered shield.

Instantly there arose so deafening an uproar of "treason, treason!—disloyal knight!—rescue!—vengeance!" that Owen was stunned and bewildered. Knights and pages instantly rushed in; some caught the horse, others raised their lord; archers levelled their bows and men-at-arms their pikes to protect their fallen chief; and Sir Thomas Robesart, furiously enraged, shouted to them to charge and avenge their lord, disloyally overthrown.

Owen tried at first to take advantage of the confusion and release his squire. But he had only succeeded in cutting the thongs which bound his hands behind him, when a crowd of the irritated soldiery of Stafford rushed around them both. Their purpose was evidently deadly, and the ridiculed coat of mail served Owen in good stead during the first storm of blows and thrusts of pointed weapons which assailed him. But he was apprehensive for the safety of Rhys, whose only protection was a jacket quilted with steel wire; and, drawing his

mighty falchion, he dashed his charger so fiercely among the assailants that they gave way in every direction. Meanwhile Rhys, though fettered to his steed, contrived to draw his long knife or dirk, and defended himself by stabbing everything within his reach, unmindful of the sufferings which he inflicted on his own carcass in the necessary efforts.

But the issue could not have been long doubtful, as the English soldiery, exasperated and ashamed at their repulse, returned in additional number and fury to the charge. Captured or beaten to pieces, Owen must in the end have been, but for an opportune circumstance. Most fortunately for him, the shouts and confusion attracted the notice of a cavalcade which at the moment crossed the open space before Stafford's tent towards the royal one in the centre. Two or three knights were instantly despatched from this group to inquire the cause of the disturbance, who set spurs to their horses, and arrived at a gallop. They rode into the midst of the tumult, and threw themselves between the assailants and their intended victims, like hunters when the hounds are mangling a deer at bay against the laws of the chase. In the midst of the subsequent uproar of accusation and recrimination the whole cavalcade arrived, and a knight who rode at their head settled the tumult with a single wave of a truncheon which he carried.

Never until now had Owen beheld so magnificent a squadron as that which appeared to his wondering gaze when he turned to survey his rescuers. The splendour of the accoutrements of the knights, the variety of crests on their helmets, the rich colours of their emblazoned surcoats and of the caparison of their steeds, dazzled his eyes wherever he looked. But it was not without a strange throb of the heart that he perceived the knight with the truncheon wore a crown round his helmet, and over his suit of silver armour a most gorgeous surcoat, wrought in jewellers' work with the arms of France and England quartered, and the significant motto wreathed round in lilies of pearl—"Win me and wear me." The vizor of this personage's helmet was down, so that Owen could not distinguish his features; but the magic effect of his presence, the awe and silence which followed his first word, convinced him that it must be the mighty Henry V.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE VIRE.

"WHAT is the matter among ye? have ye a bear-bait in the camp?" inquired a stern and commanding voice from between the bars of the crowned helmet.

"Even so, Prince Hal!" muttered ancient Pistol within his teeth.

By this time the Earl of Stafford had recovered his senses, and was staggering to rise in the arms of his knights. "My men would punish a rogue, my redoubted lord!—A spy, a French spy! a villanous savage that hath, by treason and in most unknightly sort, discomfited me!" he exclaimed.

"He hath pleasured me then, Stafford, since thou hast dared to slight mine express ordinance!" said the king, vehemently. "God's life! thou shouldst be where thou hast set this poor tattered camp-boy, I'll warrant me, for a much less breach of discipline."

"He is no camp-boy, Sir King, but my varlet and messenger thus shamefully maltreated," said Owen, in a tone which, in spite of himself, was full of awe and respect. The conqueror of Glendower and victor of Agincourt could not but infuse both.

"The vassal brought a letter—and did refuse any homage to my person," said the earl, in some confusion.

"Doth he owe thee any, Stafford? Is he vassal of some lordship of thine?" returned Henry, sternly.

"He is a Frenchman, we deem, that feigns he can speak no language save his own, sire; but surely all Frenchmen owe homage to him who represents your royal person—or wherefore are we in France?" said Sir Thomas Robesart, very dexterously.

"Yet, is this the discipline ye observe, old Robesart," returned the king, more mildly, "to suffer a messenger to be worried in our camp like a strange dog in a kennel? What message didst thou bring, vassal? Fear not: the worst we ever heard was not many hours before it mocked its senders."

The king no doubt alluded to the summons to surrender, brought to him by the French heralds, on the eve of Agincourt, and the recollection lowered the haughty tone in which Owen at first took up a reply for his luckless squire. "He was the bearer of a loving challenge to a passage of arms,

couched in a letter which it pleased my Lord of Stafford to reject, as I must needs think!"

"Nay, false knight, for thy squire himself did raise it from the dust where I had cast it, and where it merited to lie!" returned the bruised earl.

"What hast thou done with the letter, Rhys?" said Owen, in Welsh; and the squire, conceiving that he had now permission to speak, launched into an eloquent flood of narrative in the same tongue. One inheritance at least the grandson of Iolch Dhu derived from his poetical ancestors—an extraordinary flow of words.

"By David and all his leeks, Captain Fluellen, is not this a countryman of ours? And is not this most excellent Welsh?" interrupted Henry, in so altered a tone of gaiety and good humour that Owen could scarcely believe that it came from the same man.

"O, py my Gotts,—Gott pless your highness, that I should say so! She is either a countryman of ours, or a man of this Prittany of France, where they are all our first cousins, every one of them?" replied the officer thus addressed, who had come up with a body of billmen escorting a culverin.

"Of Brittany? It may well be so," said the king thoughtfully. "We think there is no Welshman living who would come to our camp to deny us homage now! Let this fellow be released, and himself bring us his missive, which we will receive as a shentleman, and trust he will offer as one."

"I lost nothing, sithence I cannot read things written with monks' reeds," said Stafford, sulkily, as they released his late captive from his uncomfortable exaltation.

"Dost thou boast thy shame, Stafford?" said the king, with evident displeasure. "And how is this?—is this fellow as savage as his attire, that he denies us his knee, and yields us only cap-homage?"

"A prince's herald carries his head as near the clouds as a prince!" said Rhys, somewhat apologetically, but perseveringly observing his mountain etiquette, in spite of numerous explanatory and angry gestures.

"What says he, Fluellen?" said the king.

"Ah, if she pleashes your grace—and if she does not—she says her master is as good a man as she ish—and she lies!" replied the captain.

"Softly! I know not that," said Henry, using his dagger to cut the silken string of the letter which Rhys handed to

him, conceding as much as possible in the way of homage, in the form of a bow, to his own brawny knees.

Owen fixed his gaze with great anxiety on the king while he perused his letter of defiance; but he could only see the glitter of his eyes between the bars of his helmet, as he raised them from the task.

"Uncle of Exeter!" he then said, turning to a grey-bearded warrior who rode beside him, "methinks we tarry too long before St. Lo, since a wandering esquire of arms—a maiden of chivalry by his own confession—deems himself a fit challenger for a knighthood, than which, since the times of Arthur or Charlemagne, none more renowned hath exercised itself in arms."

"It ish true!—By Cheshu! and I would have blown the main tower in pieces this morning if my Lord of Exeter had not been so obstinate!" said the captain of artillery. "Ah, by my peard, he would not have the men-at-arms killed so cowardly, he said."

"Well, sirs!—But who art thou, sir esquire, whose vassal boasts him the equal of Henry of England?" continued the king, with evident curiosity.

Owen felt for the instant all the ludicrous nature of such a pretension, under the relative circumstances of his position; and, after a pause of shame and indignation almost amounting to agony, he eluded a direct reply. "I would be known by my deeds, Sir King, not otherwise," were his words.

"Certes, thou art not our cousin the Dauphin?" said the king, with a gravity which mingled much of mockery and scepticism. "The old fox of Armagnac would not trust the royal gosling so far out of his reach! Can it be that we are honoured with the visit of our cousin of Burgundy's heir, the Count of Charolois, who, we hear, doth not love us so well as our kind purposes to his house should make him!" But, no, we have it!—it is Bretagne's brother, Richemont, who speaks so high and haughtily against us, and esteems himself our destined vanquisher because Duguesclin was born in his country. But how doth he call himself the 'maiden of chivalry?' What sayest thou, Garter?—do we misremember, or was not the Count of Richemont among our prisoners at the Somme."

"And was knighted before the field was struck, my liege—therefore, no maiden of chivalry!" replied the king-at-arms thus appealed to.

"I am none of those great lords—yet am I what I call

myself!" replied Owen Tudor, haughtily, though aware that every gaze was now bent upon him in curiosity and wonder.

"Then shouldst thou be better skilled in the gentle usages of chivalry than to presume, being but a simple esquire, to challenge any men of knightly degree, much more this chivalry of England; but this is not Gascony, and we must not boast us—though merely to name the deeds of some around sounds like it! Know, then, that it became thee not to challenge any but the pages and varlets of my camp, thine equals!"

Owen was silent through mingled mortification and anger, but luckily one of the esquires who attended the king broke the pause ere it had time to brew a tempest. He was attired in the peculiar armour adapted to the use of the young aspirants of chivalry, distinguished only by its elegance and beauty of design, and the magnificence of a mantle of rainbow-coloured velvet checkers embroidered with silver thistles, which descended to his horse's hoofs.

"Sir and my lord," he said, with much modesty in the earnest entreaty of his tone, "sithence this fair esquire is of so high degree—and like myself a maiden in arms—I pray you grant me the long-promised boon to essay myself against him!"

"Be it so, fair cousin—the enterprise is for beards of thy length, and we will stand here as judge of the field," said the king, with a smile which none saw but all felt. "We will see what strength is in a hand so skilful on the lutestrings as our gentle James of Scotland's! But it must be with proper weapons of pages and varlets—with ashen spears! Let them be brought."

Owen was vexed in his heart at the degree of contempt which he thought was included in this regulation; but the honour of encountering the young King of Scotland—for such he understood the esquire to be—was too great to be refused. He hoped to display himself in a manner to win respect, at least, from the great English leader; and measuring the royal esquire's slim and courtly figure with his eye, he scarcely doubted to overcome him even with the arms of polished warfare.

But the esquire of Henry V. was one well worthy of him in more respects than in his exalted rank. It was the illustrious and unfortunate James I. of Scotland, so long the prisoner of England, in whose custody he acquired the refinement and civilization which rendered him at a subsequent period one of the earliest poets and greatest princes of his

country. Henry, while persevering in the stern policy of his father, and retaining him captive, took care that no part of regal education should be neglected in him, and least of all the exercises of chivalry. Consequently Owen had a more formidable antagonist than he imagined.

The necessary preparations were soon completed. The paladins of Henry V. seemed to take a lively interest in the approaching exhibition, and arrayed themselves in an open squadron along the scene of action, while the monarch himself, with the most distinguished of his martial courtiers and garter king-at-arms, took station under an oak, whose wavering foliage let in frequent gushes of sunshine on their gorgeous trappings and burnished arms.

Some sheaves of ashen spears were soon procured, and one was delivered to each of the combatants. Owen vibrated that which he received with a degree of scorn, as if it had been some fairy wand, while the judicious Rhys examined his armour with as much precaution as if it were intended to glance lightning off. The irresistible force of the English discipline infused something of superstitious dread into the minds of the Welsh commonalty. But there could be no great danger in a conflict to be fought with slender spears of ash, blunted at the points, and which easily shivered in a shock. Even the pointless iron lance used in tournaments was not permitted by the strict ordinances of chivalry to the young aspirants not yet admitted to the privileges of knighthood. The dexterous management of their weapons displayed in the strokes given, good horsemanship, and the courtesies of noble breeding, were all the qualities looked for in the youthful page or esquire. A rough fall or a violent thrust were in general the worst ills that happened in their conflicts.

The young King of Scots took his spear with a smile of evident confidence, and bending courteously to his antagonist, rode gracefully to the end of the course. It may be imagined with what feelings of emulation Owen was animated when, for the first time in his life, he prepared for a display of martial skill beneath the gaze of spectators so renowned. A general movement and murmur of conversation among the knights marked the general interest, and Henry repeatedly waved his truncheon before their lines were arrayed sufficiently apart and steadily fixed. It was certain that he took a lively interest in behalf of the youthful prince, a pupil and esquire of his own, and one like himself a king.

Owen was little acquainted with these chivalric pastimes,

and, with his wild Welsh notions, imagined it still a contest of strength, even with these powerless weapons. He awaited the blast of the trumpet, which he was informed was the signal for onset, straining like a hound in the leash over his horse's neck, and when it sounded rushed forward like the wind. "St. Andrew for Scotland! who withstands?" was the young king's cry, and it was answered by a slogan, which Fluellen very accurately and surprisedly translated, "Ah, Gott's wounds!—it ish St. Dafydd for Wales, no doubts!"

The two young esquires dashed on to meet each other like stones from slings, and encountered about mid career. But the King of Scots turned all the terrific force of Owen's lance into the air by a single dexterous movement of his shield, which Owen thought would remain on his breast, where he held it at the onset. The lance, meeting no resistance, actually flew by its own violence from the wielder's grasp, and meanwhile the king's weapon passed on, eluded Owen's shield by a skilful dip, and ran full shock on his breast. Had the lance been of iron and pointed, in all probability it would have inflicted a dangerous wound; and such a stroke, among pages and esquires, was reckoned a victorious one. The King of Scots, accordingly, held his weapon lightly pressed on Owen's breast, that there might be no doubt of his success; but, not understanding the etiquette, Owen dashed the lance aside, passed on, and, bending from his steed to the ground, picked up his lost lance without alighting, and, checking his horse in full career, returned with such rapidity and violence, that the King of Scots had scarcely time to perceive his purpose ere he was dashed from his saddle to the ground.

"Shame! foul play! the King of Scots is felled by treachery!" shouted a hundred voices in a breath.

"He struck me from my horse even so! with a distant stroke of the javelin, such as cowards cast at a wild boar when they dare not abide his tusks!" cried Stafford, who was hitherto silent under the consciousness that he had provoked the king's displeasure by disobeying his command in combating at all.

"It is a false, a foul, a treacherous blow indeed!" exclaimed Henry, as the attendant raised his royal esquire, who was evidently severely hurt and bruised with his fall. "Cousin, you are wrongfully overthrown, and no good knight can deny that the course is yours."

A general clamour confirmed this judgment, and overwhelmed Owen with surprise and indignation.

"It matters not—I am nothing hurt," said the gallant Scottish prince, standing upright with difficulty. "Who could have looked for a blow when the course was finished, and the stroke confirmed to me?"

"By the blessed wells of Winifred! by the cross on my sword! I wist not of this usage!" said Owen, blushing almost every colour in succession, and yet quivering with wrath in every muscle.

"By what usance of chivalry dost thou combat, then, savage esquire?" said Henry, with a sternness which startled all present—even the war-horses, which stirred uneasily, and tossed their heads.

"By those of my native wilds, Sir King, since thou wilt know it! as ye do by those of your lady-thronged tourneys and jousts!" returned Owen Tudor, almost as haughtily. "Give me a field of battle to the knife and teeth, and we shall see if these quaint tricks of horse and lance-play avail against our rude Welsh customs, well exercised!"

"A Welshman, a Welshman!—by St. George, I began to smell roast cheese!" exclaimed Henry, bursting into an irresistible peal of laughter, which was echoed in a hundred varied tones around. "I marvel no longer at thy royalty! A king of goats and snows! Arthur and Cadwallader! I have been on Cader Idris, countryman! I know how many streams descend Snowdon! Was Noah thy great-grandfather, or dost thou inherit the clouds from thy mother? Life of God! being a Welsh vassal of my crown, how darest thou come to France to gainsay thy sovereign's right to wear the lilies in his wreath?"

"Not only to the realm of France, but to the usurped diadems of England and Wales, do I challenge your right, Henry of Lancaster!" returned the vehement Welshman; and a moment of profound astonishment, and even of terror, followed the rash utterance. Stafford laughed within his teeth, and then boldly stepping forward, exclaimed, "Give me the quarrel, my liege, and I will battle it, not only to the death, but beyond it, if God and our Lady please!"

"Stafford! the quarrel is mine, since I am the king's sworn brother-in-arms!" said a knight, whose device of the bear and ragged staff announced him to be the Earl of Warwick. "Here is my gauntlet! Let this rash boy raise it if he dares."

"In such a quarrel, Lord Warwick, I will suffer no man's precedence!" exclaimed another—the famous Mountacute, Earl of Salisbury, whose shield was painted with distaffs to

denote that he bore the honours of that house through his wife's inheritance. "I am the oldest officer of the king present, save my Lord of Exeter, who is too old, and I claim the championship of right."

"I appeal to the king!—and ere thou shalt take mine office in this matter, Salisbury, thou shalt do battle with thine oldest friend!" returned the Earl of Warwick.

"Richard, Richard, softly, or I shall forget that name!" returned the Earl of Salisbury.

"The king did give this enterprise to the pages and varlets, for whom I claim it, and for myself first!" exclaimed a youthful chevalier, whose cheeks reddened with eagerness as he spoke.

"Peace, Edmund Beaufort, peace!" said the king, silencing the whole throng by merely glancing around; "deem ye that, if this wild Welshman's arrogance merited courteous correction, Henry Plantagenet hath not an arm of his own? But we need not the addition of a leek to our blazonry to make us conspicuous!—Answer truly, esquire, and we will forgive thee! art thou set on by the dregs of that party whose poison still lingers in our veins, to revive old bickerings which we hoped were stilled for ever—by partisans of the House of York?"

"By mine own heart's hatred and defiance only, and in behalf of mine oppressed and trampled native land!" returned Owen.

"Ha! we thought we had extinguished the last embers of that flame too!—What is thy name?" said the king, with evident surprise and eagerness.

"Ap Tudor of Penmynydd!" replied the dauntless rebel.

"A stiff race, which fire and steel have hitherto neither bent nor broken!" said Henry, without any tinge of the anger which Owen expected and defied. "Well, we have tried the wind long enough; let us try the sun!—If you will have it so, Sir Esquire, I will hold this contest for a valorous mean you have hit upon to introduce yourself to our notice, and from this moment number you among the special servants of our person, whom we will knight on some glorious field with our gentle Jamie and such of the best blood of England as shall merit the honour."

"My powels yearn to emprace you, countryman!—say but the worts!" exclaimed honest Fluellen.

"I trust, indeed, that I shall be knighted on some glorious field—for France!—that shall reverse the day of Agincourt!"

was Owen's reckless reply, for a thousand galling recollections were kindled in his soul, even with the conqueror's kind and forbearing words.

"Then depart my camp, Sir Savage! in safety—but with speed!" replied Henry, with rising choler. "But that thy wild ignorance of all chivalry—yet, no!—again, we say, depart! Take thy valour where thou wilt—it shall be to a worse market, doubt not!"

"I will take it no further than the fords of the Vire—where I will abide the best or the worst your famed chivalry can do against me, Duke of Lancaster!" was Owen's audacious retort.

"Thou shalt not tarry long, catamountain!" exclaimed the Earl of Stafford.

"God's death, no!" echoed many a voice, for our fathers of the fifteenth century had already achieved for us the title of Goddams, from their profuse habit of swearing.

"Hearken all, fair sirs!" exclaimed the king, in a voice which instantly enforced attention. "If any man among ye all shall dare in any manner to answer this rebel's challenge, I will have his head struck from his shoulders, and his blood disinherited to all posterity, though it be of our own! And now ye know the penalties, which I swear by my father's bones shall be inflicted, obey me or not as ye list!"

"And by the bones of *my* father! I swear—three days will I tarry at the fords of the Vire, all force notwithstanding, Sir King, but such as it shall shame you to use!" returned Owen, with the utmost fierceness; and if in that time no knight of all your train appears to do battle with me in your quarrel, I will report at Paris—that they dared not!"

"They will fain believe thee there, stripling!—Take him from the camp, uncle of Exeter; or I shall be angry—which were not healthsome, for it is nigh dinner-time!" said Henry, controlling himself with evident difficulty. "Garter, see him safely to the barriers, and return to us with the tidings."

So saying, the offended monarch turned his charger's head, followed by his principal lords and attendants, and in a few more instants Owen quitted the barriers of the camp of St. Lo.

Owen himself could not but wonder at the forbearance and temper of a prince of whose contrary qualities so many terrible legends were afloat among the nations he had conquered. But he was exasperated with the continual reproach of barbarism thrown upon all his efforts, and with the kind of

ignominy in which he felt himself to be expelled from the fellowship of the English chivalry. These reflections continued to chafe and fume in his hot blood on his return to the fords of the Vire, where he determined to abide according to his pledge, in defiance of the mighty English king. He was still buried in an irritated revery, in spite of all Rhys's congratulations and triumphant eulogies, when they reached the banks of the Vire, so that he scarcely noticed the approach of a body of horsemen, who descended on the opposite side of the river at the moment when he was about to cross to his former station.

The riders were nearly all mounted archers, with a broad badge of the arms of England, surmounted by a ducal crown, on their breasts. Two knights rode at their heads in complete armour. That of one, who appeared to be the younger, was of the most extraordinary magnificence, and seemed, indeed, as if wrought of beaten gold. Even his helmet was surrounded by golden balls and a coronet of precious stones. His horse was sheathed in fantastic armour, which was shaped to resemble some strange monster of romantic zoology, and its trappings were most richly painted with scenes from the legends of Launcelot du Lake. A lofty plume of white feathers added to the knight's stature, which was sufficiently marked in itself.

The elder leader, a man apparently of mature age, was more soberly arrayed, and his vizor being raised revealed a stern and martial countenance, but one whose natural expression of impatience and daring time had but little tempered. In person he was rather short, but so powerfully knit and proportioned that it was impossible to doubt his great strength, which the massive arms he bore also attested.

As this company came in a contrary direction to St. Lo, Owen at first doubted whether they were English or not. But he was soon enlightened on this point. "Keep the farther bank till we cross—I am the Duke of Clarence!" cried the younger knight, haughtily. "That is your warranty if you are placed to guard this ford, esquire!"

A thought rushed into Owen's mind almost with these words. The brother of Henry V., a knight already greatly renowned, despite his youth, was before him—certainly ignorant of the king's prohibition with regard to himself. On whom could he more fitly show his defiance, or prove that he could use the arms of chivalry according to its own fashions, than on this young Plantagenet? Owen considered that it

was only necessary to wield his iron spear as the King of Scots had wielded one of ash, to accomplish the object.

"I guard this ford, not for the King of England, nor any of his minions, but for Sir Charles de Valois, rightful King of France!" he replied. "Wherefore, if you would cross it, make ready to combat me on the way; for I have a vow against the whole usurping blood of Lancaster, which only its last drop can appease!"

"Say you so? Make ready, then, for I will meet you half way in the river, and one of us shall swim for it or sink!" replied the Duke of Clarence, with the characteristic impetuosity of his race.

"Peace, Thomas of Clarence! it becomes not your royal knighthood to do battle with a poor wandering esquire!" said the elder knight, eyeing the Welsh warrior's garniture with but little admiration, and very considerable surprise.

"But much less shall it become my royal knighthood to let this French vaunt pass unchastised!" said the duke. "Moreover, Sir John, I need some little exercise to set my blood aflowing, which is chilled with our three days' rest! Therefore, St. George be my speed, and, Frenchman, I am coming!"

And without allowing time for any further remonstrance, the duke set his lance, struck his mighty steed with spurs of nearly a foot in length, garnished with rowels of the same diameter, and galloped into the ford. Owen lost not an instant in imitating the example, while the elder knight, as if doubtful what to do, first urged his horse forward to interpose, and then checked it into a high curvet, for at that moment the combatants encountered. On this occasion, at least, no fault could be found with Owen Tudor's manner of fighting. With the natural facility of the Celtic nations in imitation, he almost exactly repeated the lesson taught him by James of Scotland, and hurled both rider and horse over with the shock of a similar stroke into the Vire, while he himself gained the opposite bank, swift and unshaken as a whirlwind.

The elder leader instantly dashed into the stream, with some of the archers, to the duke's assistance. But Owen's mountain agility won the start of them, and, flinging himself from his horse, he was the first to raise the prince, who was in some danger of drowning, though the river was shallow at the ford, from the weight of his armour, and the struggles of his heavily caparisoned steed.

"Gramercy, knight! my new surcoat is finely baptized!"

said the duke, shaking himself like a water-dog when he reached the shore. "What farther pleasure dost thou need at my hands? Shall we have a bout of swords?"

"My lord, this may not and must not be! Thomas, I command thee, if I am thy father and master of arms!" said his companion, angrily. "Already have we exceeded the king's ordination, who least of all forgives those whom he loves for disobedience! Therefore I will suffer no further arbitrement!"

"I crave no further pleasure from you, royal knight," said Owen, courteously, "but that you will tell the king of England I am worthy to encounter other than pages and varlets, since his brother has deigned me the honour of a tilt!"

"I will make no ill report of you;—but by what name shall I call you?" replied the young duke, with visible vexation.

"Call me but the Champion of the Ford of the Vire!—by that title the English chivalry will not have forgotten me," said Owen.

"I may count myself one of them; yet have I never heard of such a champion," replied the elder knight.

"In very truth, Talbot, mayst thou! since it whitens French cheeks to hear that name!" said Thomas of Clarence. "Yet it but flushes our new champion's, as if he thought himself a match for thee too!"

"Nay, for the noble Talbot obeys his king too liegemanly; and Henry hath ordained that none of his chivalry shall hinder me in the quittance of my vow!" said Owen, struck with the formidable name of the warrior, but with a sarcastic bitterness which attracted his attention.

"What vow is this that King Henry will not have broken?" he inquired with feigned carelessness.

"I have sworn that I will keep this ford against any and all of the English chivalry, during three days, in despite of his command to the contrary!" replied Owen.

"Sayest thou so, Frenchman!—and said the king so?" said Talbot, suddenly. "This is not well: it was knightly proffered and should have been knightly answered—and so I will tell the king, who will believe when Talbot says, 'tis so! But now to your saddle, fair son Thomas, for methinks you are more hurt than we deemed, since you lean so heavily on your sword."

"A shrewder fall had I never—the water nothing broke it," replied the royal knight. "Yet, in faith, it is some comfort to find mine overthrower is known to be so valiant that the king will not trust his famous peers against him!"

It is probable that the prince began to suffer no slight degree of pain from his bruises, for with all his pride he winced considerably as he remounted his steed. He then bade farewell to Owen Tudor with much more respect than he had shown at the commencement of the interview, while Talbot somewhat sulkily lowered his lance in sign of greeting, and the whole cavalcade resumed its advance over the ford. Owen watched with great though silent exultation, until the last banderol fluttered out of sight. He was then about to retire to his lodgment, when he was called to an encounter much more perilous than those he had withstood so far.

Whether reflection increased the irritation which Talbot naturally felt at seeing his pupil overcome, or that he was vexed at the vaunts of the supposed Frenchman, he had glided away from his company, under pretence of taking a more deliberate survey of the ford, and now recrossed it with two attendants.

"Valiant knight, whom it pleases to disguise some renowned shield with a blank field, until I know the king's orders concerning you I cannot disobey them—and I am not bound to know them but from his own lips—wherefore make ready and I will joust with you," said Sir John Talbot.

"It is too great an honour to one so young in arms; for I cover no glorious achievements with this cloud of nothingness!" replied Owen, modestly.

"The Lord Thomas of Lancaster is as good a knight, of his years, as ever wielded sword or lance!" returned Talbot. "He who can foin as thou didst with him may well encounter Talbot, for I am famous in battle rather than in tournament. Yet I would try one push with thee, for the mere love of arms and courtesy. Feuter your lance—I am ready."

To feuter was to set the spear in rest for a charge; and Owen, fired with a glorious hope, immediately complied with the request of his great antagonist. The prophecy of Glendower rushed glowingly upon his recollection, and, as it was certainly the height of daring to venture a contest with so illustrious a knight, now or never might he learn whether to dare and to do were correlative terms in his destiny.

And in truth the resentment and emulation which burned in his heart made him resolve that nothing short of destruction should prove his overthrow. They met in so fierce a shock that Talbot shivered his own spear on the breast of his young antagonist, while that of Owen pierced his shield and rent his surcoat into tatters.

Talbot whistled. "Thou hast oak in thy backbone, knight," he said, examining Owen with surprise. "Young Thomas need not grieve so much over his bruised skin, for, by my faith, here is something red coming through the scales of my hauberk! Draw thy sword and let us hurtle together, for I must see thy colours too or ever we part."

"Noble Talbot, I am but an esquire of arms, and know not whether it is lawful for me to encounter at short weapons with a knight," said Owen, with perfect ingenuousness, for his only anxiety was now not to forfeit the esteem of so renowned a chevalier.

"Only an esquire!—and joust at sharp spears with knights?" returned Talbot, sheathing his half-drawn sword with a clash. "But mayhap thou hast some vow of deliverance of arms?"

"I have left proclamation of one in your king's camp," replied Owen.

"I will learn the conditions, and return to finish this adventure when my horse and arm are less weary, for we have ridden far to-day—and yonder comes Clarence, who will be vexed if he knows what I have done!" said Talbot. "I will make confession of thee, natheless, and doubt not thou shalt have sport enough in thy three days of deliverance. Yet could I be right glad so valiant an esquire would turn to our fellowship, for the worst Frenchman among ye all cannot deny our king's right to the duchy of Normandy, which we are now winning for him at our leisure!"

"King Henry hath no sharper enemy in all the ranks of France than I am or will prove!" replied Owen. "But farewell, Sir John Talbot, for I fear I shall not see thee again."

"*How so?*" replied Talbot; but at this instant the Duke of Clarence was heard shouting on the opposite shore, "Talbot, Talbot! why tarriest thou?" and the famous knight, gathering the rags of his surcoat together, and waving the splinter of his lance as a salute, recrossed the ford of the Vire.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DELIVERANCE OF ARMS.

OWEN went to slumber in his verdant lodgings with a heart full of hope and triumph at the success of his first chivalric adventure. Such a commencement satisfied his most ambitious desires, and administered a rebuke to his haughty

enemy which he would not fail to feel. At the same time he had but little expectation, after the oath by which he had bound himself, that Henry would allow his chivalry to visit him on his watch. Still he determined to remain the three days to which he had pledged himself, and then to depart for Paris, where he meant to apply himself assiduously to acquire the usages of civilized warfare.

Two days, indeed, elapsed, and not a single knight nor armed man of any sort crossed at the fords of the Vire. It was certain that Talbot must have found the king inexorable, or he would have returned to renew the conflict according to his promise. Owen's bitter sentiments against the monarch received an accession; he even imagined that this was done for the purpose of preventing him from acquiring a distinction which might have forwarded his views in Paris! His ill temper extended to all the circumstances around him. He began to fancy himself an object of ludicrous attention to the master of a fulling-mill turned by a diverted current of the Vire, in the rocks above his place of watch.

The fuller was a man of large person, with a nose of extraordinary hues, and fat cheeks richly tinted with the colours of the grape. He was very carelessly and slovenly dressed, seeming scarcely to take the trouble to buckle up his bulky person in its nether habiliments. But apparently he led a joyous life, working little, and singing and drinking almost continually, with a numerous acquaintance who delighted in making his mill their rendezvous. The irritated descendant of Arthur began to imagine that this merry plebeian dared to make him the subject of his gaiety—that he even pointed him out to his visitors as he sat on his steed broiling in the noonday sun, as if there was something diverting in his appearance, to judge by the shouts of laughter which occasionally descended to his ears. Once Owen was certain that the fuller nodded with ironical politeness to him as he swilled a deep draught of some generous fluid, perhaps drinking to his health in a freak of sportive malice.

The third day arrived, and Owen was so wearied with his tedious and useless sojourn that, but for the pleasure he took in it as an act of defiance, he would have resumed his journey. It was a very warm day, and the chafing of his mind communicated itself to his body until his armour glowed like the shell of some unhappy crab cast on a bare rock in the sun. But he would not leave his station at the ford, in dread lest some antagonist should arrive and find him unprepared, which

was against all chivalric rule. And thus he remained, until at length he had almost dropped asleep with fatigue and the monotonous murmur of the waters and foliage about him, when suddenly the welcome ring of a blow on his shield startled him into life and hope.

Looking joyfully up, Owen was astonished to perceive, instead of the rider in warlike panoply, with plume and spear and painted shield, whom he expected to behold—a tall stout figure, very loosely arrayed in a suit of greasy leather, a red camlet mantle and hood, and a pair of slovenly buskins which he had not troubled himself to fasten at the knees. Instead of a warrior visage, grimly shadowed in a vizor, he beheld a jolly carbuncled face shining with the oil of fatness, and a pair of humorous eyes fixed upon him, with a smiling expression of curiosity and satirical gaiety. The only weapon of this champion was a crab-stick, certainly of formidable dimensions; and, instead of striking the shield with the usual weapon of warriors, it had pleased him to throw a wineskin at it, inflated with air, the explosion of which startled Owen and his steed from their repose.

The surprise and anger of the champion of the Vire were almost equally excited, more especially as he recognised in this strange antagonist the laughing fuller to whom the mill above belonged. "Vile churl, what mean you?" he exclaimed; "know you not that this shield is hung as a challenge to passers-by of gentle blood and arms, and not to base-born peasants with cudgels?"

"I guessed even as much, Sir Unknown! for, if I were of good and honourable degree, the spurs should be hacked from my heels ere I would undertake so valiant an enterprise," replied the fuller, gravely in words, but with laughter everflowing in his eyes. "I challenge you to a bout, not with lance, nor sword, nor axe, nor even cudgel—but with a can of our wine of the Bocage; which is not wine at all, but, what is much better, jolly red cider. Here is the tankard, and here is the drink. Bacchus never brewed better when he first taught our Normans the art. You are hot, and it is cool. Will you drink, or must I go reeling to bed, for I have made a vow to see this pot emptied to-night, for the good of my body, since they say too much drinking injures the mind?"

"Thou art a merry companion," said Owen, who was indeed hot and thirsty, and was pleased with the jovial tone of the invitation. "Pour on; I am a soldier, and

unless your cider sets my teeth on edge, I shall not complain of it."

"It sets nothing on edge but the appetite for more—we make it not of green apples," replied the visitor. "Methought, when I nodded to your worshipful knighthood the other day, that you looked pleased, and as much as to say that you would gladly return the civility. But my wife had the keys of the cellar on that occasion. Mark how brightly it plays, so that I have half a dozen little suns of amber sparkling in my can, rusty as it looks on the outside! Such another am I as my can! but you know me not, and it will seem like boasting. My name is Olivier Basselin, and I am renowned throughout the length and breadth of the Bocage as the best and jolliest song-maker the world hath seen since the days of Anacreon the Greek."

"I have never heard of thee, nor of him either," replied the mountaineer.

"That consoles me, but 'tis no great marvel," said the modest poet of the Vire. "They do not sing my songs in great halls and castles, but in much better places! Nay, not in pulpits or in oratories, though we have jovial monks, too, in our country—but in taverns where the cup goes fast round and the jolly fellows roar at the top of their voices till the angels cannot hear their own psalms; in cottages, on winter evenings, when they sit roasting the chestnuts to make them thirsty, and drink till the grandame dances! There you might hear me sing in fine style, unless the chorus deafened you! But drink, and let me take my turn."

And, as he handed a full tankard to Owen, the poet began singing in a lively, though not very musical voice, one of his own Virelays:—

"I fear I shall be ill!—
How could I be so steady?
'Tis an hour since I drank,
And my face is pale already!
The fish must soon expire
When it leaves the watery sea,—
'Tis just the same with me
When my liquor I require.

"I fear I shall be ill!—
How could I be so steady?
'Tis an hour since I drank,
And my face is pale already!
And, though fishes don't want always
To have their snouts in water,
To the gallant Malmoisy
We should give no moment's quarter.

"I fear I shall be ill!—
How could I be so steady?
'Tis an hour since I drank,
And my face is pale already!
Shall we make ourselves like fishes
For wife or family,
And leave the full cup flowing
When there's such good company?

"I fear I shall be———'

"Fear it not!" interrupted Owen, laughing; "thy face is of all the colours of sunset, and thy nose is like the rainbow of the mist."

"Honour to my nose, say I, then!—and truly I prophesy that it will be renowned when the heroical deeds of its contemporaries are forgotten!" said Basselin. "I wrote a chanson in its praise, which will be sung as long as there are jolly companions in France. It commences thus—but I am a little out of breath to sing the whole—

"'Beauteous nose! whose rubies have cost many a pipe
Of wine white and red,
And with purple and crimson, the richest of stripe,
Art gorgeously spread!

Big nose! he who looks at thee through a full glass
Deems thee lovelier still;
Thou dost not resemble the nose of the ass
Who makes water his swill!'"

"In very faith it doth not," said Owen, smiling. "But I like thy cider better than thy songs: I have drunk but little wine in my day, yet the best mead that I remember no way rivalled it."

"What manner of drink is mead?" said the Anacreon of cider, a little piqued in secret with this slight at his poesy. "Surely the tale is not true, that in some unhappy countries they drink fermented beeswax and water?"

"Honey and water, Maître Basselin!" replied Owen, rather testily.

"Why, then I marvel not that ye are so restless and cannot abide in them. But from what land come you which it has pleased Heaven to think fit only to swill a wash of beeswax?" said Basselin, pausing as he raised a brimming tankard to his own lips, in seeming curiosity and suspense.

"Of the sweetest and richest honey, I tell ye, companion, for the which our Wales is famous, and in especial the isle from which I come—the sacred Arvon!" said Owen.

"The bears of Dauphiny have as good drink, I'll warrant

when they find a swamped bees' nest in a rock," persisted Basselin. "Nay, methinks the fairies brew something like it in all the buttercups of a meadow, on a dewy morning. But, letting that pass, if you had plenty to drink, even of such poor stuff, why left you your native land, messire, to get hard knocks in making a man king of two countries who can hardly govern one?"

"I serve not Henry of England!—I seek for honour and the glory of arms!" replied Owen.

"A broken head and aching ribs!—were none to be had without crossing the seas?" returned the poet of the Vire.

"Wales is conquered!—her chiefs no longer gleam along the cloud of battle when it pours down the hills on her foes!" said Owen. "Surely ye have heard the tidings of our defeats and ruin in France?"

"We have been too busy of late with our own," said Basselin, calmly refilling his tankard. "But I envy ye, since ye have reached so blessed a state of tranquillity! Would to God the duchy of Normandy were well lost!—For my part, I could be content if it were won a dozen times a day, provided it might be effected without the gleam of a lance among our apple-trees. But, alack! this dispute of our noble kings cannot be settled without damage to our husbandry, it seems! But how is this, messire, you do me no justice! Do you call yourself a soldier, and desert a comrade thus in the attack? Shame! to arms!—Drink, drink—here is our weapon!"

"I shall need a nobler one, perchance," said Owen, grasping his spear and rising in his stirrups. "Yonder comes one—that resembles a herald!—perchance some knight follows him, who will joust with me."

"If you are so anxious for a rough fall, why not jump from some of our rocks here? You can have one of almost any violence at choice," said Basselin; and, while he spoke, the herald carefully crossed the ford, sounding every step of his way with a long rusty lance.

There was much that was singular in the appearance of this dignitary which struck both Owen and the merry fuller with surprise. He wore the sleeveless coat of a herald, very rudely painted with a huge lion holding a lily in its paw. He rode on a wretched jade with all its ribs marked as distinctly as on a farrier's skeleton, and his countenance was remarkable, from its cadaverous paleness, seeming almost as if plastered with white paint. He wore a very flighty

herald's cap, set round with peacock's feathers, and the strange contortions into which he writhed his face as he approached amazed the spectators.

"Art thou the knight of doughty enterprise who waitest here to conquer or to die, and without so much why or wherefore as might stir quarrel and high debate in fowls of wrath, that dunghills tread?" said this singular herald, in full as singular a tone, as he arrived on Owen's side of the ford.

"I am he who defends this ford—and who art thou?" returned the Welsh esquire, sternly.

"I am the herald Peacock, or Paon, as in tongue of court we do it call," replied the herald, with unabated pomposity; and, deliberately drawing his legs from the stirrups, he crossed them like a tailor on his horse's neck. And eke am I a knight of high renown—at least the servant of one—and like master like man—as your worship may perceive by looking down on your varlet's throat agape for news!—Sent am I to bid you not to go to bed with birds, unworthy company!—still less to depart, but to hold yourself in readiness to receive a worthy chevalier who cannot steal from his place of durance to respond to your challenge, till all blessed things are gone to rest."

"I shall not fail him!—what are his name and degree?" said Owen.

"He is my master—and will shortly be yours—that is all you need know at this present," replied the herald; and, without any further conference or salutation, he transferred his long legs again to the stirrups, turned his nag's head, and recrossed the water, singing in a loud discordant note,—

> "He vaunted so long, and he vaunted so loud,
> That he startled a dead man out of his shroud!"

"Dares Stafford violate his lord's command, or is it some landless adventurer like myself, resolved to win honour at every risk?" mused Owen, after the departure of this strange messenger. But, deeply imbued as he himself was with the superstitions of the age, he was surprised at the terrors which seized Rhys. "It is nothing human, ap Tudor!" he exclaimed. "Look how the good war-horse shudders! It is the ghost of some herald slain on an embassy!—Tarry not his sender's coming; let us begone!"

"If it be the fiend himself, spouting flames, I will not budge a foot!" replied Owen, and yet not altogether undisturbed.

"I like not yonder herald," said Basselin. "There are no fighters so greatly my aversion as those who have much to win and little to lose! Now, to keep a herald and to keep him in rags, argues pride and poverty in equal proportions.—I say, beware his lord, whoever he be!"

This substantial kind of fear removed a much more terrible one in Owen's mind, and he cheerfully requested Olivier Basselin to stay and witness the result of the encounter.

"I am so weary of my house and my wife and my children, and all the other good things my thirst has left me, that I consent," replied the Norman, laughing. "It is pleasant to witness an encounter when one cares not which side wins —and it is thus with me at present."

In the joyous society of the minstrel of the Bocage time passed rapidly, until at length the reddening shadows among the oaks and rocks of the cross rivers reminded Owen that his antagonist ought to have arrived.

"There will be moonshine enough to be killed by," was Basselin's consolation. "Yonder comes the chaste goddess—staring with her broad impudent face over the hills! And yonder, too, comes our adversary!"

"Can it be Stafford in this strange attire?" said Owen, gazing with astonishment at two figures which appeared deliberately crossing the ford.

The foremost was a knight of tall and powerful person, but clad in a suit of armour evidently of an antiquity so remote that Owen's coat of mail seemed modern in comparison. It was of elaborate and magnificently-wrought rings of metal, but rusted and worn in several places, as if with the damp of ages. His esquire who followed him and bore his shield, painted with some very ancient blazonry, almost effaced by time, was garbed in a fashion as far out of date, or which one skilled in antiquarian science would have been puzzled to determine. Both wore their vizors closely down. A lion's tail hung by way of plume to the knight's helmet, and a hide of the same animal, grisly as it was torn from its back, was fastened by the front paws over his shoulders and breast. Lance, sword, mace, and battle-axe were his weapons, the brightness of which contrasted with the ill condition of the rest of his array. The extraordinary size and strength of his horse and its worm-eaten though still splendid caparison of tapestry velvet, emblazoned with arms in gold and colours, added to the ominous effect of his whole appearance. But Basselin completed it when he exclaimed,—"Why, who is here—or

what? It is the armour of William the Conqueror, from his tomb at Caen!"

By this time the stranger knight had crossed the ford, and, reining up his steed in front of his antagonist, seemed to grow stiff and rigid as marble. There was a long silence, during which the Welsh esquire gazed in astonishment and superstitious dread at the object before him.

"Art thou not ready, Sir Champion?—or wherefore dost thou pause?" said the stranger at length, in a deep and hollow voice, in which, however, lurked something of unsteadiness, which might have seemed like laughter to a less preoccupied listener.

"You come in marvellous plight, Sir Unknown!" said Owen, at length. "But you are welcome!—by what name shall I bid you so?"

"Sir of the sheepskin and egg!—or, by the mass, is it a goatskin?—I know not wherefore aught in my appearance should seem so strange to one who is himself the strangest sight I have beheld for the last four hundred years!" replied the stranger. "Your vaunts may well rouse the dead, and William the Norman sleeps at Caen not so soundly as men deem! Dost thou deny his descendant's right to this land of Normandy, and shall he slumber on? But, setting aside his bastardy, I trow he was as good a gentleman by birth as any from Wales; and therefore ask me no further question, but abide the stroke which won England, if thou mayst!"

During the utterance of this speech, which the speaker himself could scarcely expect to be taken seriously, Owen gazed at him with increasing anxiety. The antique and rusty style of his garniture, the visible remains of a crown which he now discovered on his helmet, the motionless attitude in which he sat his steed, the stony stillness of the potent animal itself, all contributed to Owen's dismay.

"Let me behold thy visage—I fear not the face of mortal man—but thou! dost thou not jest with me!" he said, in a tremulous voice.

"Nay, fair esquire, I would not win the victory by indirect means, and to see my face would appal thy life-blood into some thick and breathless coagulation!" replied the unknown.

"I will not battle with thee!—return in all blessed names to thy tomb!" said the superstitious Welshman, crossing himself rapidly.

"Yield thee then my prisoner, and I will lead thee to the

camp of Henry Plantagenet, where thou shalt be passing well received!" returned the stranger.

"Never!—I will rather perish, and, God and St. Elian aiding, I defy the fiend and all his works!" exclaimed Owen Tudor.

"Then take thy distance, as I will mine, along this level sward!" said the knight, turning as if to ride away. But he only moved a few paces, and, laughing outright, he turned again to the youth, who had not stirred.

"Pardon me, valiant springald!" he said. "It were to carry the jest too far to carry it farther!—I knew how thy Welsh fancies might be worked upon since the dreamer, Glendower, made ye all twice men or twice women with planetary lies! Lo, I am no spectre, but a plain knight of flesh and blood, keeper of the king's trophies—in one of which I was fain to disguise myself to steal from the camp unknown! And this is his lance of Agincourt."

So saying, the stranger knight raised his vizor, and, instead of the ghastly countenance of the grave, one appeared, of a somewhat dark complexion it is true, with nostrils, veins, and muscles strongly developed as in a race-horse of the purest breed, but with a frank goodnature and joviality in the bold laughing eyes, the high forehead, the handsome lips, very foreign to that ideal. His black hair clustered in thick rings round his head and on his upper lip. His figure, as he now stood in his weighty armour, was the very model of knightly strength and symmetry, save that the neck was a little too long and the flesh was worn somewhat hard and sinewy with constant and violent exercise.

Indignation and shame contended for mastery in Owen's breast at this discovery, and, without in any manner reciprocating the gaiety of his adversary, his fair face grew dark with passion as he exclaimed,—"Let us see if thine earnest be as good as thy jest!" and grasped his lance.

"Nay, 'tis better; I come again to offer thee our king and his peers' fellowship," replied the knight; "for, from all I heard, they grieve to lose so mettled a companion."

"Thou comest in vain, then," returned Owen, fiercely. "I will hold no fellowship with the son of the murderer of the noble Richard II.!—Defend him—and thyself!"

"Nay, sir," interposed the stranger's esquire; "you did promise me that—"

"Peace, peace!—I may not brook this foul slander on the memory of so royal a king—and one who loved me!" replied

the knight, slowly and gloomily, as if recovering from a shock. "Make thee ready, malapert boy! since nothing but blows can teach thee reason."

"He will put some false Welsh trick upon thee, my lord!" said the English esquire.

"And if he doth!—I will foil it with a blunt English one," replied the stranger, carelessly; and setting his lance in the rest, he rode away to take his course.

Flaming with passion, Owen dashed off in a contrary direction, and, inwardly revolving how to retaliate the trick which had been played upon him, he bethought himself of the rope and noose used in capturing the wild cattle of the mountains which he bore with him, ignorant that such wild sports were in vogue nowhere out of Wales. He made this ready in his hand as he returned at full speed, apparently to encounter his antagonist, and throwing it from a distance, avoided the stroke of his lance, and rushed past with the noose firmly fixed round the English knight's girdle; then, galloping on with all possible speed, he endeavoured to tear him from his saddle. But the promised counteraction was ready. The English knight set spurs to his horse, and, almost instantly coming up to his antagonist, grappled him in his arms with such violence and fury, that he tore him from his saddle, and dashed him to the ground.

"Trick for trick!—cry, umpires, which is the better?" said the English knight, laughing unconcernedly and cutting away the rope with his dagger. "'Tis well it was not round this long crane's neck of mine! So now, good esquire, of all loves I pray thee, let us have a full and honest shock to try which of us is the better man—so may our Lady help us in mortal fray!"

"Amen to that!" cried the exasperated Welshman. "And since thou hast put so great a scorn upon me, and standest here for Henry of England, whom of all men I most hate, let our quarrel be mortal!"

"Why, man, I am not of the cannibals of Polonia—what will thy dead carcass advantage me?" said the English knight, quite calmly. "But I trust ere we part to give thee what shall serve thy turn for awhile, as cutting thy throat would for all eternity!"

The English knight's esquire again essayed some remonstrance, but was peremptorily silenced by his lord; and Owen in the meantime remounted and sullenly rode to take the proper distance for a joust, while his antagonist humm-

a song and dipped his lance playfully at the daisies as he proceeded in a contrary direction.

Excited to greater fury by the coolness, amounting to contempt, of his antagonist, it is possible that the excessive violence of Owen's onset baffled his own purpose. The matured strength and skill of the English knight also gave him advantages which he well knew how to use. Owen's spear glanced from his breast like light from an iceberg, while himself and his steed were hurled to the ground by the stroke of his opponent's lance. But in a moment he leaped up on his feet, drew his sword, and flourishing it with wild sparkles in the moonlight over his head, ran with frenzied impetuosity to meet his adversary on his return from his victorious career.

"Nay, for I will take no 'vantages!" said the generous knight, springing to the ground. "Take my bridle, Jamie! —Man to man, I will not shun Hercules himself, that was a good knight when the world was in its pagehood. It hath been foretold to me, that only the foe I dread shall overcome me—and I have yet to meet with him!"

"And me, that I have but to dare—to do!" returned Owen, reviving in all his strength at the recollection of his prophecy.

"Aye, but mine is the truer oracle, for my own heart tells it me, and no foolish conjuress or soothsayer!" returned the English warrior. And drawing his massive sword, though with some slight hesitation, he strode a broad step forward, which set him foot to foot with the Welsh esquire.

Formidable as he was in the strength of his youth and fiery courage, Owen could scarcely be deemed a fitting match for the ripe manhood of his adversary. It struck Olivier Basselin, at least, in this point of view, and he now ventured to interfere on behalf of his young companion. "Why need ye brattle away like wild boars till one or other is ripped?" he exclaimed. "Ye have done enough to prove yourselves both men of as thick skulls as any warriors in the world, messires! —and what can ye prove more by splitting them?"

"He speaks, sooth!—I have done as much for thee, esquire, as at this time is needful!" said the stranger knight, making a gesture as if to sheathe his sword.

"Then dost thou own thy king a usurper, and his sire an assassin!" exclaimed the furious Welshman; "and I will report at Paris that the English knights dare only fight when they are driven to it, like rats in a ship!"

"Make ready, then, for I am a little angry—which is a *little* mad—which is a good deal Welsh!" said the English knight, now evidently provoked—and their swords met with a clash which betokened mutual good-will to the encounter.

It happened with Owen as it had often befallen to his countrymen in their long conflict with the Anglo-Norman conquerors. The fury of his onset exhausted himself, and although the English knight sustained it with more difficulty than he expected, and retreated several steps, receiving some blows which made his rusty armour ring, he was not long in regaining the ascendency. Owen's breath began to fail, and the vehemence of his attack to slacken. This was the signal for the English knight to return it, which he did with such violence and overwhelming force that Owen was compelled to retreat before him, scarcely able to cover himself with shield and sword from half the mighty strokes which rained in upon him. Pieces of his armour began to fly about, and, but that it was the masterpiece of Rhys's skill, the flesh must have followed the strokes. The faithful smith himself looked on with the utmost anxiety, but was at the same time unable to conceal his exultation and joy in the proof sustained by his handiwork.

"Blessed David! there's a blow to cleave an anvil! Look how the sparks fly!—but the good steel laughs at it all!" he exclaimed. "Ha, ha!—hammer away, Saxon! thou threshest flints."

"I see no great occasion for rejoicing and laudamus," thought Basselin, "if this gibberish means that."

"Tut, tut, he is but resting under shelter of those blows!" said Rhys, adding softly, "but, ap Tudor, they are not shadows of the oak leaves that thou shouldst sleep under them!"

Owen felt but too well the necessity of renewing his efforts, and these words, pronounced in his native tones, revived infuriating recollections. The English knight was amazed at the excessive violence and rapidity with which he now returned his strokes, intent, as it seemed, rather on destroying his antagonist than on preserving himself. But his calm and never-wearied sword-play baffled all Owen's attempts to rush in upon him. "Nay, at this sport I could keep all the waves of the sea at bay," he said, neither out of breath nor temper. "Pour on; so furious a hailstorm cannot last."

With all his tranquillity, the English knight was watching an opportunity which the blind fury of his antagonist could not be long in yielding him. But several times,—as Owen

himself could not but feel,—when one presented itself, the English knight refrained from using his advantage.

"Hold thy hand, good esquire!" he said at last, withdrawing his weapon, when he imagined the Welshman would be glad to do the same. "Let us breathe, and wipe the sweat out of our eyes!"

But Owen was unacquainted with the gentle usage of chivalry, which gave all the sanctity of a truce to a pause thus demanded. He was deaf as well as blind with fury and pain, and his sword descended on the English knight's helmet with such violence that he reeled back several paces.

"Ha! disloyal savage! but it shall little avail thee," shouted the knight, recovering almost instantly; and rushing forward with a vehemence which he had not yet displayed, Owen's sword shivered like glass beneath his mighty stroke. Still defending himself with what remained of the weapon, he was literally borne down, by the blows of his antagonist, on one knee. Yet he manfully maintained the fight, making several vain efforts to regain his feet. In these attempts his guard was necessarily left exposed, and his destruction seemed at hand, when with two blows, heavy as falling timber, the English knight first benumbed his sword-arm so that the weapon dropped from it, and then struck off his helmet with another, which followed perhaps without his own desire —for he paused when it needed but another stroke to conclude Owen Tudor's knight-errantry.

"Yield thee, thou wilful Welshman! yield thee to Henry of England's mercy!" shouted the knight. "Helm and sword and leg-bail hast thou lost—and wert thou not unacquainted with any fair usage of chivalry—thine honour too, to strike a knight who proffered parley."

"I will not yield to Henry—but rather to death!" returned the unconquerable esquire. "Take my head to him if thou wilt—but nothing else of me shall go with my consent!"

"Why, then! . ." said the English knight, making his sword quiver bluely in the moonlight over Owen's head, who opposed his shield wherever it seemed likely to descend, with unabated courage. Rhys followed the wavering of sword and shield with clenched hands and panting breast, but without venturing to interfere without his lord's summons. Basselin, however, did not stand on such refined etiquette, and implored mercy in the most vociferous terms.

"Let him ask and he shall have it!" returned the English

knight. "Answer, boy, for the last time: wilt thou surrender to Henry Plantagenet or not?"

"Do thy worst, for that will I never!" repeated the indomitable Welshman.

"Then with this stroke," exclaimed the English knight, raising his sword, and Rhys uttered a wild yell, "I dub thee knight, by the title of the Chevalier Sauvage! Live to make ladies simper at banquets, only yielding me as ransom this egg and chain, that Exeter and Talbot may believe when I am boasting at supper." And his sword descended in the gentle ceremonial of chivalry on Owen's shoulder.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAGER OF THE EGG.

"GENEROUS and noble knight!—but take rather the heart from my breast!" said Owen, in mingled wrath and admiration of his victor's generosity.

"Nay, I will have nothing but that egg!—and that egg I will have," replied the English knight. "I have a lady's longing for it since you deny it me so vehemently—and, moreover, I know it is one of your shaggy madman, Glendower's, ensigns of chieftaincy in rebellion."

"Take it, since it lies, with all its prophecies!" exclaimed the passionate Welshman, rending off the chain. "Since my first battle yields me only shame and surrender—take it, for it lies most blackly—bidding me only beware of the swordless children of song, and of the strength of the Lion, which is the month that reddens the corn, and it is but green grass around us now!"

"By St. Lo, it is my company then which has done the harm, and not the windmill strokes of this knight!" said Basselin, joyously. "Though my songs are but the whistling of a blackbird in a wood, the girls of these parts have crowned me poet with apple leaves and blossoms—to match my complexion, I suppose! So let all the shame be mine, and keep the glory to salve your bruises."

"Meseemeth, I should have my share in bearing that burden," said the English knight's esquire, alighting and raising his vizor. "James of Scotland is known at least for a humble follower and servant of the fair dames whom men call Muses, that do twist their golden hair with stars!—and I am he."

"My royal lord! are you well enough apaid for the wrong put on ye by this wild esquire, or in what further shall I pleasure you?" said the English knight, in a rebuking tone, which brought the colour to the young king's cheek.

"Take from him the chain and egg, and it shall suffice me!" was his reply.

"I warn thee, Sir King!—though at this present I am not able to withstand, yet will I acquire the skill which hath vanquished me, and win back my chain, were it in keeping of the fiend himself!" said Owen, whose wrath revived when he perceived the talisman of his fortunes handed over to the King of Scots.

"Say you so? Why, then, it shall prove an adventure worthy of Tristrem or Launcelot; for I will give it to the keeping of the best knight whom I can find among the chivalry of England—and so of the world!" returned the prince.

"And I will challenge it wherever I see it, or whoever dares to withhold it!" replied the Chevalier Sauvage, flushing darkly.

"Look that thou remember and observe to keep to the time of this loud music," said the English knight. "And I promise thee fairly that whoever takes this chain, shall wear it on all occasions where 'tis likely ye may meet, be it tourney or field!—But quarrel not with thy prophecy on this score, for thou seest I bear a lion in my shield—and it was of me, and not of the jolly harvest weather, thy conjuror bade thee beware! And now give me thine hand in pledge—for I must depart."

Owen extended his hand in angry ratification of this agreement, and the robust English knight gave it a hearty clutch. "Fare thee well!—I have made thee a knight, and, despite this mishap, a good and stout one wilt thou prove! But where is the herald, Paon, who may certify the same to show to our friends in Paris, who will else put thee in the rear ranks among the esquires and varletry, where thou canst win no worship on us?"

"He is on the farther side of the ford, where you bade him wait—I will summon him," said the King of Scots, with the deference due rather from an esquire to a knight than from a king to a subject.

"And who art thou, knight, my vanquisher?" said Owen with a deep sigh, but hoping and expecting to hear some illustrious name pronounced which might lighten the shame of his defeat.

"Thou dost not know me then?" returned the knight, carelessly. "But that is well!—Thou must needs guess that I am poor and landless, since I have undertaken this enterprise against the king's terrible menace. But it was not for the honour of England to let thy vaunts pass unanswered, and the King of Scots will stand my friend! My name is Roy—Sir Henry Roy—of the stout English Roys, mark you, and not of those of France, who, for carpet service, wear the lilies in their coats. Thou seest my lily is in a lion's clutch—which is by heralds called a shield of pretence, for I have little more right to wear it than what the claws of my beast afford me. And yet, because my name is Roy, I think to inherit all the lands of these of France—when we have conquered it!—But this fighting is as hot a trade as a blacksmith's.—Hast a goblet in this wild hostelry of thine whereby I may help myself to a draught from the liberal stream?"

"Water!—dost thou drink water? Then wilt thou never prove a knight of renown," exclaimed Basselin. "I hate it worse than a cat, and when I wash myself I am in danger of choking if a drop gets into my mouth! Water!—those who want to poison me need only give me that! If Alexander the Killer had not been drunk the greater part of his time, he would never have conquered the world! Beasts drink water—and is a man a beast? Nay, if you drink water, take fishes for company—not Olivier Basselin!"

"Is that thy name?—I have heard of thee, thou merry fuller," said the knight of the Lion and Lily, smiling at this effusion.

"Paon is here—in mother English hight, Peacock the Prudent!" said the pallid herald, who arrived at this moment, in obedience to the summons of the King of Scots.

"Did Garter lend thee one of his emblazoned scrolls, rascallion?" said the knight, sternly. "If so, produce it, and be silent, unless thou wilt have thy teeth set a-rattling like thy beloved dice in a box."

The herald seemed to understand this language, and produced a showily painted parchment, with materials for writing, usually carried by men of his profession, who were frequently called to make sudden exercises in their craft.

"Thou are skilled in these limnings, Sir King!" said the English knight. "I pray you write out the whole circumstance of this deliverance of arms, even from the time when we first saw this wild esquire in the camp! Relate with what audacity he came and bearded Henry of England and all his

chivalry! Omit not his brave encounter with Clarence and Talbot—and then record how Sir Henry Roy, of England, did first beat and then knight him by the title of the Chevalier Sauvage!"

"And add mine oath of the redemption of the chain and egg of destiny!" said Owen, in a manner which showed he had valid claims to the designation of the Wild Knight.

"Be it so!—And now, good Olivier, not to speak it profanely, hast thou aught better than the wine they drank in Paradise, within whistle?" said the knight of the Lion and Lily. "For I mislike not thy company, being of those who love a merry chanson and a foaming cup almost as well as fighting."

"Ay!—but my wife will not let us have any, unless you send me with an absolute command," replied Basselin. "I will say ye are marauders; and, as there are many out on this side of the Vire, we can have as much cider as we please, on that compulsion."

"Marauders!—it cannot be—the king has strictly forbidden all plundering in these parts," said the knight, starting from an easy attitude, in which he had thrown himself on the turf.

"Truly, messire; but he has only one pair of eyes to see his commands obeyed, and the great lords cry 'Halves!' and never another word to our harriers," replied Olivier, calmly.

"Were not my steed so weary, I would lend the king the use of mine eyes for the nonce!" returned Sir Henry Roy, the strong veins of his forehead swelling, and his brows darkening with a frown of singular fierceness. "But I will repeat what I have learned in a place where words fall acorns and rise oaks."

"You shall do well—and if you win the king to hang half his army and return with the rest to their own country—better," said Basselin.

"Bring us as much drink as this purse can answer for," returned the knight, tossing one well filled to Basselin, who looked at it and then at his can, and, turning with solemnity to Rhys, said, "I shall need thee—come with me!"

Owen repeated the words to Rhys, who complied with some reluctance, murmuring, "She is not a tapster's boy!" and by the time they returned with an abundant supply of Basselin's favourite beverage the royal herald had completed the attestation to Owen's deeds of arms and creation as a knight, duly signed.

"To the health and good speed of our new-made equal!" said the knight, raising the foaming beaker to his lips.

"Largesse, largesse!" shouted the herald, extending both his hands. "I have not long been a herald; but, by the Lord, I do remember me that, when they raise this cry, knights and nobles shower gold upon them: and good customs should not be lost!"

"Peace, rogue! I charge myself with all fines and fees—and take thou this cup as earnest of thine!" said the English knight, handing the empty tankard to the herald, who, after a single magpie glance into it, forwarded it courteously over to Rhys ap Goronwy. Basselin interfered by refilling the cup in time to prevent the latter taking offence at what he evidently considered rather in the light of an insult than a jest. But Paon seemed skilled in practical wit, for, when the squire raised the goblet to his lips, it was suddenly drawn over his shoulder and emptied by another. He glared fiercely around, and Paon, who had done it, fell flat on his face as if dead with fear.

"Truce with thy follies, ancient!—this is not Eastcheap, nor are we in the Boar's Head Tavern—the which I bade thee bear in mind at some little peril to thy bones, thou wottest!" said his master, sternly. "Yet, by St. George, jolly fuller, thou dost remind me of a fat man whom I loved once—save that he drank sack and thou drinkest cider. Heaven rest his greasy soul! Yet his requiem should be drunk, not sung!"

"Methinks Basselin hath a song that might fit the occasion," said Owen, gloomily. "Good eating and drinking are all his themes—and, if your friend was of the same kind, I see not wherefore he should not sing him a fitting dirge."

"Nay, for a sorrowful, lackadaisical, funeral whine, commend yourself to this young chevalier of your making!" replied Basselin. "I do oft listen to him of an evening, when he plays on his harp, until I could well consent to go and hang myself up as a scarecrow in mine own orchard, out of mere melancholy!"

"I had liefer hear a trumpet bray, at any time, than the softest lute that ever warbled love!" said the English knight, yawning. "Therefore, fat fuller, as I am master of the entertainment, do thou sing something in the tune of thy red nose, and nothing trouble thyself who says yea or no!"

"But, fair knight, I am no more a lover of blows than of damsels," returned Basselin. "Hearken, and 'tis ten to one—ye will hear!"

VAU-DE-VIRE OF OLIVIER BASSELIN.

WAR AND WINE.

"As valiant as Cæsar am I in that war
Where the weapons are goblets, and red wine the gore;
Much rather I'd stagger with drink than a shot
That goes slap through your vitals, and, presto—you're *not!*

The clishclash I love is of bottles and glasses,
And the cannons I want will not frighten the lasses.
Big pipes of lush crimson are those I require
To assail the sole fort, which is thirst, I desire!

For my part I think people not over wise
Who don't greatly prefer splitting headaches and eyes
To a split in good earnest that opens one's crown—
What's the use, when one's dead, of a world of renown?

A head will get better that's hurt with its drink;
It feels badly, no doubt, when it tries to think;
But, once on the pillows, its ills soon depart:
And whoever revives from a ball in that part?

'Tis much better and safer one's nose to conceal
In a cup of good liquor than helmet of steel!
And, instead of a flag waving glory like mad,
I should look for a bush that says 'Wine's to be had!'

Set me by a good fire, with my cider at hand,
And who will, on a rampart, may take his proud stand.
I had rather, much rather, not with mine host make a breach,
Than mount one to glory, and fall in a ditch!"

"Marvellously well!—I like it well, thou art the bard for me—thy songs will make no rebels," said Sir Henry Roy, laughing heartily, and repeating the last verse over two or three times. "Basselin, I will live to do thee some good if I may—if ever Normandy is mine! I mean, if I win my share in it, I will grant thee as much land to grow cider on as a king should grant his minstrel!—But why does your squire stand, sir knight? Let him sit with us, for I doubt not he is as good a shentleman as any one of us!"

"Nay, sir, for I am held as a prince in my country, and Rhys will not sit in my presence for persuasion or force!" returned Owen, haughtily.

"I pity thy courtiers, then, when thou art king!—their red shanks will ache for it," replied the knight.

"But I pray you, fair brother," said the King of Scots, "let us hear some touch of this Welsh harper's minstrelsy, or men say those of Wales are quaintly skilled on its strings."

"So be it, my royal lord—yet I trow me your minstrel

would rather cry than play," returned the knight of the Lion and Lily.

This allusion to the mortification and shame he was undoubtedly suffering in secret, stirred Owen's pride and resentment almost equally. But, desirous of showing that he set as lightly by the mischance which had befallen him as any Saxon possibly could, he desired Rhys to bring him his harp.

So exquisitely did he touch its strings in the strain which first occurred to him, and which was in consonance with the wild defiance and melancholy in his heart, that tears trickled even on Olivier's bristly eyelashes.

"It would coax a squirrel down a tree, and a woman over a house top," he murmured. "And then look at his fair face! —Knight, though thou hast vanquished in arms, hear mine oracle! If women are still the fools they have ever been, thou hast no more chance in contention with him in their favour, than sour beer with claret, in mine!"

"Now, by the mass, I deem not so—unless 'tis written in his prophecy!" said he of the Lion and Lily, who had not listened with so much satisfaction as Basselin. "But to think that a catgut, deftly touched, should make men madmen and rebels! Yet, withal, I will wager my best suit of armour against the egg-prophecies of the Chevalier Sauvage, that if ever he and I should meet among the French dames—and wend you not to Paris, Sir ap—ap—Tudor, is it?"

"With what speed I may—to crave service against England!" replied Owen.

"We may be there not long after thee," said the knight, laughingly. "And I will make this wager, that if thou takest up with any ladylove there, and will give my trumpet-wooing a fair comparison with thy flute music, I will carry off thy dame or damsel or anything but thy widow—which thou mayest keep unquestioned!"

"That would I freely adventure," replied the Chevalier Sauvage, colouring, "but that mine horoscope forbids me to woo any but the daughter of a king—with promise that my children shall be kings and the sons of kings!"

"By the fiery tail of St. George's dragon! thy prophecy is the most impudent one that ever lying wizard spoke, and Glendower hath left his withered treasons full of seed!" exclaimed the English knight. "I will have thy prophecies examined by cunning men, and, if there be any danger in them, either I will cut thy throat or thou shalt wed the

daughter of some Welsh king like thyself, and rule to the latest posterity—in imagination!"

"Nay, messire, let him take his fair face to the melancholic imprisonment of our Queen Isabeau, in Tours," said Basselin; "she is the bird to peck the bloom off a Red-William, or they tell strange lies of her in Lower Normandy! And thus shall the prophecy be fulfilled, our good mad king be never the wiser, and our children have pretty kings to rule them!"

"Old man, such jests do shame your grey beard!" said Owen, with a frown and a blush of almost feminine shame and indignation.

"But Isabeau is no longer a prisoner at Tours," replied the English knight, "or the project might serve, if we English wanted more dauphins in the land! I will let ye into a secret which hath not yet been whispered on many winds. The Duke of Burgundy has rescued Isabeau, and they are now most lovingly complotting the ruin of France in the country of Artois."

"Then oil and water mingle!—they hate each other like the poisons both are," said Basselin. "But these great events matter little to us in Normandy so long as our apples ripen! Young man, take your elder's advice, and go to the court of John of Burgundy! The old marygold is not so sweet as the fresh young daisy, it may be; but what of that? We cannot have everything at once. She is a queen. Go to the court of the Burgundian! He will not murder thee, at least, for her sake; for he has saved her as I might a ferret from the dogs, not that I love it, but to use it in unearthing my game."

"Peace!—or sing us another song!" said the English knight. "To my thought, Basselin, and not to flatter thee, I think thou art the best minstrel in all France, he or she,—though I say it, who know not what I say, being altogether unskilled in such lore."

"Nay, sir, if Mademoiselle Huéline be alive who made those lays the jongleurs sing as hers—there is a much better minstrel in France than Maître Olivier!" said the young King of Scots, with enthusiastic warmth.

"In her way—which is not mine," replied Basselin, smiling. "She makes the pretty fabliaux and lays that lords and ladies love to listen to; and in sooth, well enough, for they make one like to die of love and beauty to hear them, though one sees nothing but one's dusty old wife nodding in a corner to the tune."

"She wrote the beauteous lay of Vulcan and Dame Venus —the gentle legend of the Loving Heart—the tale of the bright Melusine de Lusignan!" said the royal literatus.

"Ay, and half the mad Burgundian ballads they sung in Paris when that side was the upper one!" said Basselin.

"A bardess—a Druidess of the harp!" exclaimed Owen, whose Welsh ideas associated something of inspired and visionary grandeur with the words,—"If she be alive in Paris, I would rather see such a woman than the stateliest palace or church; for a poet is glorious in the light of his fame, but methinks a poetess that is fair might make mankind idolaters again!"

"I said not she was fair," said Basselin, laughing at this rhapsody. "And mayhap, if her father had not at one time been chief of the mad commonalty of Paris, nobody would have discovered that a poor mediciner's daughter can sing like a princess of the old troubadour time!—for Marie de France herself was not fit to tune the lute of Huéline de Troye! But times are altered: Jean de Troye is in a dungeon, and, for aught I know, she is singing in Paradise, for the Armagnacs were not nice as to what sort of birds they put in the pie when, three years ago, they wrested Paris from the mob."

"'Tis like enough," said the Scottish prince. "Raymond of Marseilles was present at a congregation of the minstrels in their hospital of St. Julian of Paris, when she came to resign her chaplet. He hath the fair reasons she delivered, by heart, for, indeed, she sung them in the form of a romance, which he calls her lament. This have I Englished in what rude manner I best might—for I have rather forgotten my native speech than learned that of the most excellent Chaucer and Lydgate."

"The crabbed monk!—I had rather hear a sword sharpened than his rhymes!" said the English knight. "But thou canst use our English tongue better than many of us that were born with it in our heads, and, to be a royal one, art as good as a minstrel as I wot of, gentle cousin!—if I may so call your good highness! And if this jongleuresse was daughter to that Jean de Troye who ruled the mad Parisians some three months to an end—let us hear her death-notes by all means,—for I like none of the brood."

"It ran thus—if my memory plays me not truant," said the Scottish prince; and he recited some lines, which we have been obliged to modernize to render intelligible:—

HUELINE'S LAMENT.

"Minstrels, I pray ye list my lay,
  The last Huéline's lips shall breathe;
I know that ye will murmur nay,
  Will bid me sing, that Time may wreathe
Laurels eternal for my brow:
Brothers, it might have been—but now!—
I may not sing of love and joy,
  I will not sing of war and pain,
For still, despite of all annoy,
  Laughs in my veins, thy blood, Champagne!
Thy sandiest hills are crowned with vine
  Like sunburned satyrs when they dance—
Why should I teach thy lute to pine,
  Thy gayest voice to mourn, my France?
No! like thy rosy-glittering wine
  My latest memory shall be
Whose draughts still in the last drops shine,
  The diamond dews of revelry!
Or if I must perforce lament
  My ruined hopes, my withered prime,
  Minstrels, it shall not be in rhyme,
But deeds, of woeful monument!
  So bid the winds of France rejoice
  Still in Huéline's parting voice!
Thus 'tis with nightingales that die,
  Thus with the sunset's ruddying close,
Thus with the lover's farewell sigh,
  Thus with the dolphin's gorgeous throes.
I may not sing of joy and love,
  I will not sing of war and pain,
And all I am—or yet might prove—
  Must be like brilliant dawns, in vain,
Which tempests baffle till 'tis night!
  Is this a vaunt?—for well ye know
  If I have sung, and if 'tis so!—
  Yet might it drearly soothe, to leave
Some hearts that watched the bursting light
  Over its sudden dark to grieve—
And Raymond Marseilles, thou wert one,
Wert wont to call my gleam—a sun!—
Ah, well thou know'st that I was born
  Only to sing of love and pleasure:
  But vain were now the laughing measure,
The golden wires are rent and torn!
No, friendly minstrel! do not wrong
  Thine art to bid me yet aspire!—
Once I had mounting dreams, and song
  Was in my breast like kindled fire
That leaps from pile to pile until
  It perishes, still climbing higher!

But quenched is all the generous flame,
  And dead is all the tender glow!
I weary of the hollow fame,
  The shadowy triumph, words bestow!
Yet will I mourn those vanished years
  Those withered hopes—the fruitless flowers
  Of my profuse spring's budding hours,—
And, brothers, yes, these tears are tears!
Though, like the exile of some star
  Ever, in all its gayest moods,
My soul hath seemed to dwell afar
  'Neath brighter skies, by greener woods—
As if some memory of a past
  More beautiful, more brightly fair,
Came over me—and fled too fast—
  As smiling dreams illume despair—
Yet did I dream, for 'twas a dream,
How, lulled by some enchanted stream,
And crowned with flowers of heavenly bloom,
  With one I loved—I know not how—
For, veiled as the mystery of the tomb,
  Was all the beauty of his brow,—
I sat and sang of love and hope,
  Till all the skies did flush and glow,
And my heart swelled beyond its scope
  With some wrapt bliss—it ne'er shall know.
And say ye nought was given in vain?
  I tell ye, yea, this soul and heart!—
Save its lost, ineffectual strain,
  In what of theirs have they had part?
Heart! thou hast sought in vain to fill
  The mighty void that aches within;
  And, soul, what guerdon, didst thou win
For all thy toil and nameless ill?
A river through a sandy waste,
  Through science sped thy gathering wave,
By no congenial shore embraced,
  Rolling to some o'erwhelming lave,
Some cataract of maddening charm,
Where thought may dash itself to calm!—
Oh, were it not a torrent's hell
  To hang for ever fixed, though whirling?
'Tis thus with this wild bosom's swell,
  O'er the abyss of passion curling!
These thoughts must burst in wrath and ruin,
Or be their own dark home's undoing.
Therefore, farewell!—the word is said,
  The thing remains, a blank for ever!
Farewell, my lute! since hope is dead
  'Tis time, indeed, that we should sever.
From lyre of mine no strain shall fall
Youth's dancing footsteps to appal

Like shrieks unearthly from a vale
  Of magic flowers that seem to bloom,
And splendid lights—that fade and pale
  And leave the wretch to night and doom.
Farewell!—it is a lingering word
  That hath methinks a lingering fall;
Farewell, ye minstrels, that have heard
  My first, my latest notes,—ay, all!
Yet, lays my land once loved! remain
  To say that I have been, but not
With any shadow of the pain!—
  I bear, and I will bear, my lot
Without a tear, without a sigh,
  For pity or for mockery!
Lonely to live—more lonely to die—
  This hath been, minstrels!—this must be:
So let the winds of France rejoice,
Still in Huéline's parting voice!"

"Our Lady's grace! sung she this dolorous dirge—Huéline de Troye?" said Basselin, almost incredulously.

"But what is the wench to us that we waste so much time on her?" interrupted he of the Lion and Lily. "Mine host, our cans are empty, and I remember too well the tapster's charges of old to believe we have drunk my purse dry."

"I will see this minstreless, an she be alive and in France!" exclaimed Owen Tudor. "A sorrowful lay pleases me well! What grief was this that darkened so sunny a heart, Maître Olivier?"

"Perchance she got married!—I heard she was betrothed to the master-butcher's son of the Grande Boucherie," said Basselin, laughing; "so have a care how you venture in among their knives!—Sir Knight, I obey: it is not my fault—sobriety is the weaker vessel."

The bacchant bard staggered a little as he ascended the steep ascent which led to his mill; and during his absence the English knight amused himself by putting a great number of questions to Owen concerning his purposes in France, and the state in which he had left his country. His irascible and defying tone, however, at length disturbed the good humour of the Englishman. "Ye are a strange race, ye of Wales!" he exclaimed. "A man can neither beat nor drink ye into fellowship! And so, farewell, as your butcher's gleewoman chants it! But wilt thou take the fragile wager of the egg? I promise thee thou art in no danger to be called upon to remember thy prophecy, in France, where there is only one king's daughter to woo—and the lion of England hath already more than an eye on that royal heifer! Yet the Frenchwoman will not let thy pretty smock face go scot-free,

(I pray thee, pardon me, Sir James!) and 'tis like enough I shall be in Paris when our king gets there—who is on his way! Thou canst not deny I am thy better in arms—and I offer thee a fair and soft means to get back thine egg again, for, in the way of fierceness, I doubt me thou never wilt."

"It shall be seen!" replied Owen, who was exasperated with the tone of this challenge almost as much as with his defeat. "When we meet again, I may be better skilled in the use of these arms ye vaunt! And for the love of women—yea, where I love, I dare challenge all mankind in rivalry!"

"If 'tis with a Frenchwoman, verily, thou wilt find thou hast no fewer to contend withal! Truly, 'tis the wager of the egg, since 'tis on a woman's love!" said the knight of the Lion and Lily, laughingly. "Yet thou art more dangerous now, since the threats in thy prophecy are spent! The sons of song and the Lion have done thee all the damage they may!"

Strange as it may appear, Owen's confidence in his horoscope was restored, as if by magic, at these words. His impetuous nature passed rapidly from one extreme to another, and, though piqued by the English knight's generosity, he could not but feel it. Basselin returned with a new supply of cider, and the conversation was renewed with much more geniality. The vinous humour of Maître Olivier seemed to the taste of the English knight, whose soldierly joviality won the heart of the minstrel of the Vire. The herald, Paon, and Rhys became the best of friends, and the former retaliated with his stilted eloquence to all the Welsh that poured from Rhys's tongue, like a torrent of his own hills when the snows melt. The poetical King of Scots and Owen Tudor agreed like two fine instruments attuned to one melody—and all was for some time mirth and good fellowship where had so lately been war almost to destruction! The morning dawned, the birds sung on every tree, dew glittered on the turf where they held their revelry, when the English knight and his royal esquire departed. Basselin was roaring one of his songs at the pitch of his voice, and was so loth to part with his warlike companion, that he fell three times in the effort to embrace him. And Owen was so far elated with the unusual quantity of strong drink which he had swallowed, that he renewed his wager with an addition that showed he was not altogether unaware of his own personal beauty. "What woman that hath eyes will prefer thee to me?" he said, laughing, as he assisted the Englishman to his steed.

"Show me thy love, and I will answer!" replied the undaunted knight of the Lion and Lily.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRANCE AND PARIS THREE CENTURIES AGO.

OWEN had now fulfilled the terms of his challenge of the Vire, not altogether to his satisfaction; and on the following day he resumed his journey to Paris. He took a kind farewell of Olivier Basselin, whom he found in great glee, on ascending to his mill for that purpose. Sir Henry Roy had forwarded him a handsome present of a tun of excellent Bourdeaux, with instructions to send him word if any plunderers again made their appearance on the banks of the Vire. We are, therefore, at a loss to discover what "grand' vergogne" it could have been which the manuscript of Baïeux records as having been inflicted on the joyous Olivier by the English, and which ultimately caused his demise—unless some of the barons, whose practices he had revealed, took an opportunity to repay him with a sound cudgelling—which is said to be the malady of which he died. It is therefore very unjust of the French minstrels to declare, as they do, in their lamentations on this event, that the English delight in killing poets.

Quitting Normandy, and entering the Isle of France, Owen pursued his way to the famous city of his aspirations—that Paris which has played a part of mingled brilliancy and terror in all the ages of Christendom. His journey soon brought him on traces of civil warfare, which made him deem, and justly, that the direst foreign one is preferable. Castles in ruin, or tenanted by brigands who ravaged the surrounding districts at pleasure; burned villages; cities jealously guarded, and displaying hostile ensigns within a few miles of each other; trampled harvests; smoking farm-houses; peasants wandering in distraction, or perishing of disease and starvation on the roadsides—wearied the gaze of Owen, not unfamiliar in his childhood with the doings of war.

Eleven years had now elapsed since John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, rid himself of his rival in power, and perhaps in love, Louis, Duke of Orleans, by a treacherous and cruel murder. The madness of Charles VI. offered an irresistible prize to the ambition of his brother and cousin. The latter won it—but by means which still excite horror. After long contentions and a feigned reconciliation—ere the wine of the Eucharist, in which they swore peace and brotherhood, was dry on their lips—Burgundy caused his rival to be bru-

tally assassinated. The brains and gore of the only brother of a king mingled with the mud of an obscure street in Paris, and the deed, openly and daringly avowed by the perpetrator, as a just and necessary act, provoked an undying spirit of revenge. The partisans of the bereaved family flew to arms, and strove with them to obtain that justice which the laws could not inflict on so powerful a criminal.

Every drop of blood shed in this quarrel fell like the dragon's teeth of Cadmus on the soil of France, until at length the whole nation might be considered as arrayed in opposite camps. In vain did Charles VI., in one of the intervals of his terrible malady, effect a forced reconciliation between the murderer and the widow and children of the victim. The flames burst out more furiously after every lull, so that, even when the chief of one of the two factions, the young Duke of Orleans, became a prisoner in England, his cause flourished so much under the auspices of a new leader, that it finally distinguished itself by his name. The Count d'Armagnac, a Gascon nobleman of great power and possessions, whom the ascendency of his party created Constable of France, wielded the resources, not only of the faction he had espoused, but of the monarchy, in its favour.

Fortified by the possession of Paris, and of the persons of the king and dauphin, and animated by the most vehement personal hatred of John of Burgundy, the constable directed against his enemy all the force which should have been turned against the foreign foe. Henry continued his conquests in Normandy, with little interruption, save what was offered by the loyalty of the nobles and the ancient hatred between the nations, while the two factions struggled over the rest of the devastated provinces of France. It was even reported and believed that, in his thirst for vengeance at being deprived of the power he had obtained with so much difficulty, Duke John was in secret alliance with the invaders.

The constable, though aged, was a man of great sagacity and courage, or he could not have contended so long and successfully with the difficulties of his position. He was styled by the Parisians the "Fox of Armagnac;" but he well knew how to eke his fox's skin with a piece of the lion's. And that the Parisians had often discovered, or, at least, that large majority of them which the aristocratic languages of Europe have agreed to call the populace. Then, as now, the fiercest and most daring of European commonalties, the mob of Paris, was devotedly attached to the Duke of Burgundy. With the

usual instinct of the rebellious noble, John the Fearless offered himself as a reformer and redresser of grievances—a repealer of taxes—in an age when the ferocious anarchy of feudal government had reached its highest excess in the tyranny of the rulers and the misery of the ruled. All the dazzling glories of chivalry which accompanied it were only the splendours of a desolating comet. The frantic revolts of the Jacquerie, in the rural districts, and of the Maillotins, in Paris, were indeed quenched in torrents of blood. But the spirit which had kindled them was only spent for the moment, and waited but a chance wind to blow them again into a furious flame. Smarting under every oppression and degradation which can afflict humanity, it may be imagined how much the reforming pretences of the Duke of Burgundy endeared him to the common people. The terrible energy of his character excited the admiration of so congenial a race, and the jovial familiarity of his manners recommended him wonderfully to men accustomed only to scorn and ill treatment from their masters. His royal birth, and the general success of his enterprises, threw a lustre which half veiled his crimes, while the vast territories and alliances of the house of Burgundy furnished his violent and ambitious policy with ample means and instruments. The Constable d'Armagnac could therefore count among his foes almost the whole populace of the city, which was his chief place of strength and refuge.

On the other hand, the wealthier citizens and burghers of Paris were Armagnacs to the backbone. That is to say, they were people who desired to keep what they had got—of which the ascendency of the mob and of a mob-courting chief threatened to deprive them. It was by their aid and vigorous support that the Armagnacs expelled their enemies from Paris, and kept possession of it against all the efforts of the Burgundians. The awe and reverence which even the pageant of royalty inspired, gave incalculable strength to the former faction, who were in possession of the persons of the royal family. At the period we are entering upon, the Duke of Burgundy had lately retired in discomfiture from an attempt to regain the capital, and the only circumstance which for a considerable time occurred to revive the hopes of his partisans, was the escape of Queen Isabeau, and her open alliance with him against the authority of her husband and son.

It scarcely needed such a wife as Isabeau de Bavière to complete the woes of Charles VI. But Isabeau de Bavière was his queen—a woman who united very few of the good

qualities of her sex to nearly all the bad ones. Haughty, extravagant, revengeful, and licentious, France owed to her a great part of all the miseries which wrung its vitals during that unhappy age. In right of some parchment signed by Charles, in what her partisans were pleased to style a lucid interval, Isabeau claimed the government of France and the title of Regent. The dauphin's pretensions to this dignity kindled a rivalry between the mother and son which circumstances deepened, in the former, to mortal hatred. Her rapacity, and scarcely disguised profligacy, furnished her enemies with abundant pretexts to effect her overthrow. They even managed to excite the jealous wrath of the royal madman himself against her. He caused one of her favourites, a knight called Louis de Bourbon, to be seized, put to severe tortures, and finally drowned in the Seine, after making such confessions as suited the views of his capturers. On evidence thus obtained, the queen was banished from the court, and confined in the castle of Tours, with every circumstance of indignity likely to chafe a proud and vindictive spirit into fury. The great treasures she had amassed, her jewels, money, plate, and precious furniture—for she delighted in magnificence—were seized and divided as a booty among the spoilers. The poor state, in whose name it was all done, did not certainly receive the lion's share in the scramble. The escape of this turbulent and exasperated woman, by the aid and to the protection of the Duke of Burgundy, once her bitterest foe, struck as much consternation into his enemies as if he had received the assistance of an army!

Our knight-errant came as fuel to the fire, yet he could not but feel grief and compassion at the sight of the woes which are the ashes of military glory. The nearer he approached Paris, where the struggle had of course been deadliest, these signs multiplied. The hideous devastation, visible on every side, oppressed his young spirits with a sadness which he never dreamed to experience on approaching the hoped-for scene of glory and success. There were dangers also on the way, from which only his military garb, or perhaps its little splendour, protected him. The ruined villages around Paris were haunted by cut-throats and brigands, who pursued their trade with perfect impunity. Disbanded soldiers and houseless peasants, or wretches which the city itself disgorged, lay in wait, in almost every solitary spot, to surprise the hapless traveller. This kind of spoliation was exercised at times with the formality and organized rapacity of a state levy.

Exemptions were sold in Paris, and protected their bearers a good deal more substantially than a legal passport. Even the wolves, which abounded in the forests around Paris, had acquired a more than natural ferocity. They swam up the Seine by night, and ravaged, almost at pleasure, both shores of the river. One of them, the shortness of whose tail, lopped off in some ancient skirmish, procured him the title of Courtaud, became the terror of the women and children of Paris by worrying divers personages of those orders.

On the whole, therefore, it was not without reason that even the valiant descendant of Arthur congratulated himself when, arriving beneath the walls of Paris, he heard the hollow echo of his horse's tramp on the draw-bridge of the Gate of St. Germain. Two heads, baked black in the sun, adorned the portcullis, the cheeks of which were tanned to leather, and showed the teeth in a ghastly grin. Little red sawtres, or crosses of St. Andrew, driven into the skull, showed that they were those of partisans of the Duke of Burgundy, and testified to the relentlessness of civil hate.

Everything marked the vigilance of apprehension. The long line of wall from the Tower of Nesle on the left, whose gloomy round bulk concealed the waters of the Seine, to the fortified masses of the Convent of the Jacobins on the right, gleamed ever and anon with the spears of warders, flaming like torches in the sun, whose persons were concealed in the depth of the battlements; the long cannon of the age jutted like masts from every "coign of vantage;" and occasionally the sparkle of a resplendent suit of armour, or the waving of a lofty plume, announced the superintendence of some knight or officer of rank.

A serjeant of the Provost of Paris, attended by a guard of archers, examined Owen and his attendant on their entrance, inquired their country, business, and many other particulars, while a clerk of the same jurisdiction carefully recorded their replies. The expressions of surprise and significant smiles which these functionaries exchanged in their task, with his previous experience, admonished Owen that it would be necessary to make some change in his attire before presenting himself to Parisian notice. He therefore inquired his way to the principal part of the town, determining to take a few days' rest, and remodel his warlike array, ere he offered his services to the constable. In the fifteenth century, this was, of course, the Isle of the City, and thither he took his way.

To one like Owen, who had never seen a larger city than Chester, the aspect of Paris was truly astonishing. The immense masses of the university, which he passed, particularly attracted his notice. He remembered, with a smile, how often he had been wearied with the regrets and eulogiums of the monk of Llanvaes, his tutor, who was educated in its precincts. The stories which he was wont to tell of the great power and privileges enjoyed by this learned corporation, of the audacity with which it measured its strength against the royal authority, occurred to Owen in a less incredible light now that he beheld its vast establishments. The bold pranks of the scholars, their contests with the citizens of Paris, and with the abbot and monks of St. Germain, their licentious revelries, related in the way of warning, came back on his memory. Yet the monk detailed these reminiscences with an unction which perhaps allowed some nearer connexion with the subject-matter than the invariable third person of his narrative seemed to confess. Owen looked about with curiosity to see some of those wild springalds; but it was probably a time of study, for only a few old friars, or grave professors, crossing the squares, book or rosary in hand, met his curious eyes.

Owen was more surprised to find that a similar silence and desertion reigned in the district which he traversed towards the city. Passing under a black castellated pile of masonry, called the Petit Châtelet, he found himself, with his attendant, on a bridge of three arches, which, being of stone, was considered a wonderful specimen of art and magnificence by both. This they crossed, and, thus arriving in the Isle of the City, became entangled in a multitude of narrow and winding streets, whence they suddenly emerged in the great square, or parvis, of Notre Dame.

Hitherto Rhys managed to conceal his share in his lord's admiration with the imperturbability of a man who had seen the world, or of a savage. He confessed, indeed, to some little surprise at the deserted aspect of the streets; but the strangeness and pomp of the spectacle on which they now unexpectedly burst threw him off his guard. He uttered a true Welsh exclamation, that is to say, a yell, which immediately attracted the notice of the bystanders.

It was not alone the magnificent cathedral, wrought from the summit of its towers to their base with ornaments exquisitely light, graceful, and multitudinous, as a pattern of lacework, and which, etched sharply into relief by the noon-

day sun, seemed chased in silver; nor the coloured splendours of the famous rose-window; nor the majestic line of crowned statues which stood like a guard of kings over the portals of the august edifice, that dazzled Rhys into so unworthy a forgetfulness of the stoicism becoming his dignity. A living and more marvellous spectacle was offered to his gaze.

Rhys and his young lord had reached the end of one of the obscure streets which formerly rendezvoused in the parvis of Notre Dame. Farther they could not advance. A vast multitude, closely packed and wedged together, occupied about three-fourths of the whole area, until breasted by the cross-bows of a guard, which kept a considerable space before the cathedral clear. Behind these weapons was visible a square framework of timber, raised on a stage, which went on iron rollers. It was gaudily painted; but Owen immediately conjectured it to be a moveable gibbet, from the appearance of a personage who seemed to have charge of it. A tall, slender man, the wiry undulations of whose form gave him the appearance of a serpent raised upright on its tail, was leaning in an attitude which he certainly meant to be rather graceful and seductive, against the main timber of the erection. His thin visage, projecting mouth, and oily brown complexion increased the resemblance. The axe which he held on his shoulder, and his bare arms crossed on his breast, seemed to mark him as a public executioner, but that the gaiety of his apparel was opposed to the idea. He was dressed in scarlet baize, fluttering all over with parti-coloured ribands, and wore a curious headpiece resembling a crown of red lacquer. And Owen Tudor was not sufficiently civilized to understand what kind of criminal it could be, which, in the shape of a scroll of parchment, inscribed with words in large Gothic characters, hung on the gibbet.

A knight of herculean proportions, massively armed, with vizor barred, and wielding a mighty mace of steel stuck with long spikes, rode slowly up and down the open space, as if to observe that it was kept clear. A mass of archers, with bent bows, lined the inner side, behind whom was a squadron of knights armed *cap-à-pié*, with black plumes in their helmets, and white linen scarfs round their waists. Owen knew that this was the badge of the Orleanists, by which they kept themselves in remembrance of their chief's untimely shroud.

The next object which caught the eye in its progress, was a old warrior, leaning on a naked sword of extraordinary

size, on the lowest grade of a platform which ran the whole breadth of the cathedral. His long white hair flowed over his armour like snow on a wintry fir. The mixture of severity and craft visible in his countenance, the antique shape and magnificence of the jewelled baldric and scabbard with which he was girdled, made Owen conclude that he was the Constable d'Armagnac. His robe of black velvet was also embroidered with arms, intertwisted with scrolls, on which was incessantly repeated the motto of the faction of Orleans. "*Je l'envie*"—"*I want it*"—was the plain-spoken device assumed by Louis of Orleans, to express his purpose of wresting from the Duke of Burgundy that power in the state which he believed to be his right. To which John the Fearless replied by a motto which showed that he considered he held his sway by at least nine-tenths of the law, "*Je le tiens*"—"*I have it.*"

The platform itself was occupied by a great number of personages, evidently of the highest rank, seated on a bench covered with black taffetas. Much variety of costume was discernible, but the ecclesiastical greatly preponderated, as was natural at a period when all offices which required a slight sprinkling of learning were filled either by priests or their rivals of the long robe. Moreover, as subsequently appeared, the occasion was of an ecclesiastical character.

But Owen's gaze was riveted, almost as rapidly as it could traverse the intermediate space, by an object which seemed to be the keystone of the whole portentous assemblage. About the centre of the platform was an elevation of three grades, covered with black velvet, on the top of which, in a great chair or throne, apparently of beaten gold, under a canopy held aloft on gilded poles by four peers of France, sat a strange yet kingly phantom. A long, lean, and pale countenance, every line of which seemed sunk into the deepest furrows of grief and mental anguish, bore upon its woeful brows a massive crown of gold, set with precious stones, which shot out long beams of parti-coloured light. The figure sat as immoveably as if fashioned of stone; but the royal magnificence of the purple robes in which it was arrayed, thickly sown with fleur-de-lys of pearls; the long sceptre which it held lifelessly in its hand; the dazzling shield of the arms of France, supported over the back of the throne by two gorgeous heralds, sufficiently announced to Owen that he beheld the unhappy king, Charles VI.

Possibly rather as keepers than that etiquette prescribed their presence in such a locality, two personages of august

rank stood on each side of the throne. A broad and plump visage on the king's right glowed under the weight of an archiepiscopal mitre; on his left was a dignitary who, though his robes revealed the fact that he was in armour, judging by the vast bunch of golden seals which he carried, was the Chancellor of France, Henri de Marle.

Owen glanced with astonishment over this spectacle, and then among the surrounding crowd, for an explanation. His surprise increased when he remarked how profound was the stillness which reigned over so great a multitude, among whom were many women and children. He saw that it was chiefly composed of persons belonging to the lower ranks of the people—classes not much given to silent contemplation. But there was a feverish intensity in every gaze, a pallor on every cheek, which testified to some great and general cause of disquietude.

All that he could observe to account for this, was, that the huge mass was hemmed in on all sides by bodies of well-armed burghers, while the populace seemed altogether without weapons—a very unusual circumstance at a period when every man's safety lay in the strength of his own arm, and individual courage was almost the sole police—certainly the sole efficient one—even in the best-managed cities of Europe.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLAMOR AD DEUM.

OWEN remembered that, on the triumph of the Armagnacs, they had taken care to disarm the rebellious populace whom the Burgundians allowed to become despotic lords in Paris. But this did not explain the meaning of the spectacle; and he turned to inquire it of a young man who had been for some time eyeing him with curiosity.

The Parisian wore a scarlet robe, fastened by a girdle, and a black furred cap, set dashingly on one side of a great profusion of light, curling, flaxen hair. His nose was rather cocked, but, on the whole, he was very good-looking, and had a gaiety and vivacity of expression which pleased the young knight. Nevertheless, he replied in a low and hesitating tone, which showed he was not untainted by the general alarm. "We are met for the execution of a criminal, messire, and to celebrate the anniversary of an event which, in certain

paris of France, is called a just judgment, and in Paris (at present) a murder! For my part, I call it neither, but the *abrupt demise* of Monsieur Louis of Orleans."

"But where is the criminal?" said Owen, after an anxious stare at the gibbet. "It is not yonder uncouth wretch, is it, whose carcass seems as bossy and gnarled as a stunted oak, and his visage as dull and ferocious as a red bull's glaring through a hedge?"

"That gentleman, messire, is the varlet of Monsieur Capeluche, the executioner," replied the Parisian. "The criminal is already suspended!—Do you mark it waving backward and forward in the wind? But you seem of too good lineage to be able to read; wherefore you will pardon me if I inform you (being myself a poor clerk of the Basoche, *vulgò*, a student of laws) that yonder scroll dangling on the gibbet is inscribed with the proposition on which Master John Petit based his defence of my Lord of Burgundy, against those who maintain that killing is murder."

This reply needed some farther explanation before Owen comprehended it, which the student of laws, though with some hesitation, afforded him.

The University of Paris, which enjoyed great power and influence throughout Christendom as the repository of the learning and wisdom of the age, was, as a body, attached to the cause of the Duke of Burgundy. This was not wonderful, considering that, since the time of Prometheus, mind and force have been at variance, both wishing to enjoy the same thing. One of the members of the University, the famous, or infamous, Doctor Jean Petit, publicly defended the murder of the Duke of Orleans, before the court and parliament, with an audacity of pedantry which covered him with honours and rewards from the Burgundians. The proposition by which he laboured to give a religious and political sanction to a treacherous assassination, was to the effect that it is lawful to destroy a tyrant by any means, and that the Duke of Orleans, being a tyrant, was lawfully destroyed by the horrible means employed. This proposition, painted in fine large Gothic characters on parchment, now graced the moveable gibbet of Montfaucon, before the gaze of the people assembled in the parvis of Notre Dame.

"Truly, to destroy a tyrant, I hold it lawful, too,—but by fair and open means, with lance and sword!" said the Welsh exile.

"Verily, say you so—and in this presence?" replied the

student of laws, in a startled undertone, and surveying the young knight with more attention than ever. "Surely, sir stranger, you do not hold with a proposition which is to be solemnly anathematized this very day, by yonder jolly archbishop and all the clergy of Paris?"

"Certes, no!" replied the Chevalier Sauvage, in an awe-struck voice, which testified amply to the political expediency of the measure. "But what strange fancy is this, to gibbet a piece of calfskin?"

"That is to be the least of its sufferings," replied the clerk, smiling. "It has to be torn to pieces, disembowelled, turned inside out, by a public executioner!—Not yonder gory coxcomb, but one of a more dangerous complexion—by a scholar of divinity!"

"Charity, messires, for the love of the Five Wounds, to an old soldier of the wars!" interrupted a voice almost close behind Owen and his interlocutor. Both—but especially the clerk—looked at the speaker without much satisfaction. A tall, sallow-complexioned beggar, attired in the tattered remnants of a military garb, whose long body hung over in a curve, from its habitual attitude of craving or cringing, was there. His head was bound with disgusting rags, and one of his eyes seemed lost, for the socket was covered with a leaden reliquary. But that which remained had an expression of deep penetration and inquiry, from which the clerk of the Basoche involuntarily shrunk.

"Under whose banner hast thou served, friend?" said he, with an affected carelessness, and throwing him a small coin.

"Under any that was willing to let a poor soldier follow it for plunder, and no pay," returned the beggar. "Methinks this young knight should have some fellow-feeling with me, for he seems to have travelled far on the same errand?"

"I come from beyond the seas; but, I trust, to serve more honourably in these wars of France!" said Owen, haughtily.

"Honour is a good thing—but gold is a better," replied the beggar. "And there are more florins, and of truer weight, in the treasury of the Duke of Burgundy than in that of the King of France!"

"Gossip, you talk loudly!—and I do marvel I see not a single butcher in all the crowd!" interrupted the student of laws. "What has become of Simon Caboche, and all his worshipful company?"

"They are penned, like their own oxen, in the shambles," said the beggar, with a husky laugh. "The Armagnacs dare

not invite Burgundians with weapons in their hands to their festivals; and the butchers cannot be disarmed, unless my lord the constable and his knights exercise their warlike skill in the Grande Boucherie, to fell us our meat!"

"Spears and drawn bows may keep Simon and his men in bounds; but by what magic do they keep his quicksilver son, Renaud, away from a sight?" said the student, shuffling uneasily to some little distance from the intrusive mendicant.

"Look, then, Master Roman de la Rose;" cried a vivacious, ringing voice, close at hand. Owen immediately noticed a youth about his own age, of a dark but lively countenance, and with an expression of recklessness and audacity which harmonized well with his flaunty holiday costume. His hose were of different dyes, and he wore a parti-coloured doublet of blue and crimson, while his cap, of green and yellow velvet, was set with a single ornament in the shape of a bull's tail, the hair of which was twisted with gold thread, and hung to his girdle.

But at the moment Owen made this observation, a violent rush and tumult around him turned his attention in another direction. This was caused by a contrary and simultaneous movement of the crowd, and of the soldiery who guarded the royal scaffolding. On one part the pressure of curiosity caused the populace to roll forward, when a side portal of Notre Dame opened, and the Bishop of Paris, attended by a long procession of his clergy, bearing lighted wax-tapers, and relics in magnificent shrines of gold wrought with precious stones, and solemnly chanting, came forth. They were followed by the chief doctors and dignitaries of the University, to make room for whose advance the masses were driven violently back. To complete the confusion, a multitude of scholars of the University, who were watching their opportunity, suddenly attempted to force a way, in a body, through the crowd to the cathedral.

The scholars were armed with staves, which they laid about them with the most reckless insolence, shouting and laughing in uproarious tumult. Indignant at the rough, though much more respectful manner in which they endeavoured to push past himself, Owen set his horse in motion, and its iron panoply soon bore him a long way through the foremost pressure, to the barrier of spears and crossbows.

"Drive them all back, scholars and all, with the veriest rabble!" shouted the powerful knight with the mace. "I care for no privileges! While Taneguy Duchatel is Provost

of Paris, the king's law shall over-ride all others! Level your partisans and drive them back—all save our brother of chivalry, whom we marvel to see among them!"

The mere voice and gestures of the terrible provost produced a powerful effect even on the riotous scholars, who, in general, despised every species of restraint. Moreover, a good number of them had reached advantageous positions, and now applied their endeavours to prevent the advance of the crowd they had displaced. The tumult quickly subsided, and Owen found himself close on the circle of archers, within which the procession from the cathedral was slowly passing. Rhys was separated from him by a broad expanse of heads and shoulders, but was making the most violent efforts to follow his master. He desisted, however, on a signal from the latter; and then Owen had leisure to perceive that he had proved of advantage to those with whom he was conversing when the movement commenced. The clerk and the beggar were on either side of him, holding by his stirrup; and, with a laugh of boyish gaiety, Renaud Caboche suddenly dismounted from the crupper of his horse, upon which he had leaped with the light dexterity of a clown in a circus.

"I held up the tail for Master Roman to mount, but he preferred coming a-foot!" said Renaud. "And this makes my father's proverb good, that you may make something of the bark of your enemy's dog, if you are wise."

"Why dost thou call me an enemy?" said Owen, laughing good-humouredly at the trick.

"Are you not an Armagnac?" returned the youth, suddenly knitting his brows into so fierce a frown that Owen was almost startled.

"Why, so should we all be, within reach of that mace, Renaud!" said the law student, in a deprecating tone. "But let us be silent now, for yonder comes the venerable young man who is appointed to explain the damnable nature of Master Petit's doctrine to the people, and to announce the penalties of believing in it! Yonder he comes, that flower of deadly nightshade and of the Sorbonne—Master Perrinet le Clerc!"

"What is he?" demanded Owen.

"If you ask his father, old Perrinet, the ironmonger, he will tell you he is the most disobedient profligate in all Paris," returned Roman de la Rose. "If you extend your inquiries to the Val d'Amour, or the Pré aux Clercs, you will learn that he is no hater of women nor wine, and that he can cut a

throat as valiantly and quarrel as causelessly as any soldier of you all! But, if you step into the halls of the Sorbonne, you will hear that he is so deep in Aristotle—and that there are so few Armagnacs among its scholars to choose from—that the University was compelled to appoint him to the honourable position he now enjoys. But do not be too much convinced by his arguments; he would plead as zealously and conscientiously on the other side, or on any side."

The personage thus characterized was now distinctly in view, for he had ascended the gibbet, escorted by a number of grave-looking doctors and magnates of the University. His appearance was rather remarkable. He wore the dark robe of a scholar in the theological college of the Sorbonne, and a tonsure, slightly indicated amidst the masses of his shining coarse black hair, marked him as an aspirant to the clerical dignity. He was handsome, according to a French standard. His features were regular, his cheek-bones only a little too prominent, his eyes bright and audaciously confident, his complexion clear and definitely coloured as the figures on an Etruscan vase. A scroll of parchment in his hand, an attitude of studied elegance and arrogant modesty, completed the personage of the clerical orator.

Owen looked with particular attention at this specimen of a species of which he had heard so much in his childhood. It happened by chance, or by the singular attraction which the eye exercises, that Perrinet's encountered Owen's in the course of this survey. What there could be in his look to cause displeasure Owen could not guess, but the scholar gave him a malignant leer, which was so absolutely unprovoked and instantaneous, that he almost doubted his own observation.

Meanwhile some ecclesiastical dignitary, probably the rector of the Sorbonne, read aloud a decree of that learned body, appointing Master Perrinet, son of Master Perrinet le Féron, citizen of Paris, to the office of defending, against all gainsayers, the anathema of the false and heretical thesis of John Petit, doctor of theology, solemnly condemned in full consistory by the bishop and clergy of Paris. This distinction, the speaker declared in a pompous preamble, was conferred upon the orator, notwithstanding his youth, in consideration of his merits and eloquence.

"That a dean of Notre Dame should lie so grossly in the face of all Paris!" murmured Roman de la Rose. "But I should like to know, if Aristotle himself were in these parts

and saw that gibbet, whether he would undertake to gainsay its owners?"

"Let us at least hear what he has to say," observed Owen.

"The cause must be bad indeed that has nothing," replied the young lawyer. "He will quote the Scriptures, I promise you, for all he alleges! I have heard him keep a tavern in a roar by the hour, merely with good texts villanously applied."

As he spoke, the scholar of the Sorbonne turned his back on the multitude while the doctors descended, leaving him on his strange rostrum. Owen perceived that he even made a gesture of obscene contempt to the populace, when, kneeling down, he asked permission of the august audience on the platform to commence. At least the uproar of laughter among the scholars, and the shouts of "Vivat Petrus!" which resounded on all sides, seemed to indicate that they perceived a jest in his peculiar attitude.

In the usual style, but with an excess of humility which, to those who were acquainted with the boldness and irreverence of his character, was not far from mockery, Perrinet first professed his utter unworthiness of so great an honour, and then requested permission to prove, from the writings of the fathers, the decrees of councils, the opinions of the wisest doctors, the irrefragable formulas of logic, and the Scriptures, that the proposition of Master John Petit, in defence of the Duke of Burgundy, was a heretical and damnable error and falsehood!

Instantly there arose a low and dissatisfied murmur among the populace; but it was quelled almost with the gesture of the terrible provost, who raised his mace, and stretched it imperiously towards them. The Archbishop of Rheims, who stood beside the king, affected to receive his commands, and arose to signify that the required permission was granted. And then—still keeping his back towards the overawed multitude—the distinguished scholar of the Sorbonne commenced his harangue according to the established forms of oratory in the fifteenth century.

"Most mighty and redoubtable Lord and King!—most Reverend Archbishop, Metropolitan of all France, and Duke of Rheims!—Right Reverend Bishop of Paris, and you, his venerable Clergy and Suffragans!—my very good and potent lords, the true Constable and Chancellor of France, and not those at Troyes, who are called so by the traitorous murtherer of Burgundy, and my ill-advised and most redoubtable lady

the queen, who is by no means regent of France, nor has *any* claim whatever to be so, more especially now that my *lord* the king is in excellent health, and perfectly understands what is said to him!—To you I address my discourse, as to persons of power, dignity, and understanding, and, above all, of authority in the church, the supreme source and fount of all justice and law!—and not to the poor and senseless people of *this* evilly disposed, bloodthirsty, and rebellious city of Paris, who have been, are, and will be, in all ages and times, *the* same! These I exhort to listen with the greatest attention and respect to the truths I have to deliver; not because they are mine, but because they are those of God, the church, and all my lords of the king's council, who, when I have done, will, I trust, avow what I have said to be their opinion.

"I take, as my text, certain words which were formerly thundered in the ears of Cain, who, in my judgment, must have been a Parisian: '*Vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra!*' 'The voice of thy brother's blood calls to me for vengeance from the earth!' as I may translate it to the ignorant. Not that my royal departed lord, Monsieur Louis of Orleans, was in anything the brother of so vile a scum, but he was the brother of my lord the king, who is deservedly, and not by any figure of speech, called 'France,'—of which country ye are inhabitants, by his gracious sufferance. Yet forasmuch as, but for your malignant aid and support, the Burgundian dared never have dreamed to shed that royal blood, I say unto you, O ye barbarous Parisians! '*Vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra!*' And now I shall proceed to show, in good order, and with such logic as I trust shall not discredit those ancient and famous schools in which I acquired the use of reason, the damnable and heretical falsehoods contained in the proposition of Master John Petit, doctor of theology, or rather perverter of the same. After which I shall publish the anathema of my lord the Bishop of Paris and of his clergy duly consulted, with the pains and grievous penalties attached to a continued and obstinate pravity of belief in this matter.

"I shall begin by proving, first, that it is not lawful to slay a tyrant; next, that my lord the Duke of Orleans was not a tyrant; and, thirdly, that the Duke of Burgundy is a traitor, murtherer, tyrant, and enemy of the public peace, whom it is lawful to kill by any means, inasmuch, as only where there are laws is anything unlawful, and John of Burgundy has set himself above all laws, either human and divine."

With these texts, and on these counter-propositions, Perrinet le Clerc proceeded to deliver an harangue of no ordinary length. The scholastic oratory of the middle ages, without warmth and colouring, or natural sympathies, was but very ill calculated to produce effect on a popular audience. But the ignorance of the age made all science imposing, and the cloudy dialectics in which the learned wrapped their meaning greatly magnified its effects on the vulgar imagination. Quotations from all sorts of authors, sacred and profane, the Scriptures and the ancient poets, the evangelists and Ovid, the favourite classic of the schools, contributed to the awe of the rude and unlettered multitude.

Having refuted Master John Petit's arguments in favour of tyrannicide by a series of pompous syllogisms, the scholar of the Sorbonne proceeded to discuss the second branch of his subject, and to prove that the Duke of Orleans had not been a tyrant. Defining tyranny to be the exercise of an unjust authority, he proceeded to show that it was impossible the Duke of Orleans could have been guilty of it, as he had never in any manner exceeded the prerogatives of the crown of France in his administration of its powers. This he proved in an elaborate review of the principal acts of his short ascendency, assailing, as he went, the several charges of magic, and attempts on the life of the king, which were brought by the Burgundians against the Duke of Orleans. The exorbitant taxes levied by the duke he compared to the bunches of grapes gathered from a rich vineyard, to which the cultivator is justly entitled. And having at great length vindicated the memory of Louis of Orleans, he proceeded to the third branch of his subject—the accusation of the Duke of Burgundy.

And now the orator waxed eloquent. There was something congenial to the nature of Perrinet le Clerc in the anatomy and exposition of human depravity. And there was scarcely a crime of which humanity can be guilty which he did not lay to the charge of John the Fearless. The troubled murmurs of the people at the defacement of their idol rather increased than diminished the virulence of his invective. Their indignation gave renewed life and energy to the orator's abuse. It seemed to please him, as it pleases the torturer who fears that his victim is dead, to see a convulsion follow the application of the engine of suffering.

The career of the Duke of Burgundy furnished abundant scope for the declamations of the Armagnac orator. Imitating

with great exactness the manner of Cicero in his oration against Verres, he heaped accusation on accusation against him until the pile seemed to touch the skies and threaten to fall of its own weight. He took for a starting-point a circumstance which befell the duke early in his career, when at the disastrous battle of Nicopolis he was taken prisoner by the Sultan Bajazet and his Turks. Bajazet was about to order him to be slain with the rest of his captives, when one of his astrologers saved the duke's life by declaring that, if he lived, he would work more mischief to Christendom than all the arms of the followers of the Prophet possibly could. Protesting against putting any faith in the words of an infidel Saracen, Perrinet asserted, and very truly, that the science of astrology was one of those which it did not require an implicit belief in the doctrines of the church to comprehend. And, inasmuch as the stars revealed themselves with fuller majesty and splendour in the dry hot heavens of the East, it must be allowed that the infidel professors of the art had an advantage over their brethren of the West. At all events, the orator declared that this prophecy was come very exactly true, and that neither Bajazet nor Tamerlane, the destroyer, nor the antichrist, Mahomet himself, had ever caused so much damage and shame to Christendom as John of Burgundy!

During the delivery of this harangue, Owen's attention was not unfrequently distracted by observing its effect on the persons immediately around him. Roman de la Rose listened with the smiling incredulous look of a man who has made up his mind not to be convinced by anything he hears. The knit brows, the fierce though low-toned and short derisive laughs of Renaud Caboche—the manner in which he kept clutching the hilt of his dagger—revealed the vehement workings of partisan feelings in his breast. But the mendicant was the most remarkable: with the utmost outward coolness, and with a smile that never once left his stern and uncongenial lips, Owen could not but read in his single eye an expression of hatred and contempt so utter that it was wonderful how he could restrain himself from more open manifestations.

But when the orator wound up his long discourse with a detail of the miseries and humiliations inflicted on France by the civil war, which he ascribed altogether to the ambition and cruelty of the Duke of Burgundy—when he declared that he continued obstinately to reject all terms of peace, and was secretly allying himself with the hereditary enemies of the

French name—the patience of the beggar seemed almost exhausted. It was evident that this part of the harangue produced a great effect upon the people; and this perhaps more than the accusation itself disturbed him.

A more unpopular charge could not be brought against a ruler, at a period when the mass of the people suffered woes so intense from the continuance of the civil war. The mendicant gazed restlessly around, and Owen heard him mutter several times to himself, "He will not come!—and this accursed scholar's lies will pass for gospel!"

Whatever portent he expected, none appeared, and Perrinet le Clerc mounted, without interruption, to the climax of his oration. "These are the reasons," he exclaimed, "which authorize me to declare the Duke of Burgundy a traitor, a liar, and a murtherer! and, what is worse than any or all, a schismatic and obstinate heretic, inasmuch as he persists in maintaining and avouching the damnable errors of John Petit, the which I have proved them by argument to be, and my lord the Bishop of Paris and his clergy, by authority. Wherefore I am commanded to inform ye, O ye bloodthirsty men of Paris, that whoever, after the solemn utterance of this anathema, shall dare to believe, or put any manner of faith in the doctrine of John Petit, falsely called doctor of theology—or shall lend the slightest aid, even so far as a good wish, in his most secret heart, to the cause of the schismatic tyrant and murtherer, his supporter, incurs all the penalties of excommunication and spiritual death denounced in the bull of our lord the Pope, which will be forthwith read to all who listen by my lord the Archbishop and Duke of Rheims! After which, all men of good disposition will sincerely join my lord the constable in the renewal of the oath which he makes every year upon this dismal day, to avenge that worst of murders since the time of Cain! And, hark, indeed it is time that the blood of Monsieur Louis of Orleans were avenged, since even inanimate things join in its cry! The bells of this holy pile, founded by his famous ancestor, Philip Augustus, yell aloud!—It is the Clamor ad Deum!"

The orator concluded with these words, and by a previously arranged and very effective coup-de-théâtre, the bells of Notre Dame suddenly burst into the discordant and dolorous peal known by that designation throughout Christendom.

CHAPTER X.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

It is scarcely possible, at this period, to conceive the effect of the menace included in the orator's announcement, that a bull of excommunication would be read against all the followers and favourers of the Duke of Burgundy! The universal consternation which the tidings spread, revealed, indeed, the extent of his popularity, but showed that the action of fears, so vague and mighty as those evoked, might greatly endanger its influence.

The populace came to this enforced meeting with their rulers probably in no slight dread of some physical chastisement, which they had no longer the means to resist. But the doom now threatened was of a more terrific character. It took away the last hope of the oppressed and miserable. The rites of baptism, marriage, and even of burial, were refused to all labouring under such a malediction, and those who perished after having incurred its penalties were supposed to pass at once and irremediably into the fiery gulf.

Even the lively Roman de la Rose turned pale, and Renaud Caboche looked with an aghast expression at the mendicant. In his agitation the latter forgot who might overhear him, and muttered in reply, "God's saints! I know not wherefore, but never until now did Huéline fail in her promise!—and she pledged herself to find some scholar of sufficient skill to refute this sophist, and desperate enough to venture life itself on the cast!"

"*If Huéline* promised, she will perform!" replied the young man, vehemently. "And she looks too deeply into men's souls to have chosen a craven! But, if they utter this curse upon us, how may we lift our arms against it?"

"Even by raising them!—tut, boy, a curse is only a word, and a word is only a sound!" replied the mendicant, with a smile of contempt, which showed that superstitious fears were not those that possessed him at least.

The name of Huéline was what chiefly struck Owen in this discourse, which he overheard, remembering the connection of a similar one with the eulogiums of the minstrel King of Scots. But he had no time to pursue the association. A low murmur passed like a sullen wind over the multitude as each communicated to another the apprehension which possessed

every heart. Then the shrieks of women were audible, mingled with the cries of children, and a deep under-bass of groans and lamentations among the male part of the audience. If an instant and unsparing massacre had been denounced, the consternation could not have been greater! Finally, infected by each other's dismay and the workings of superstitious terror to a pitch of insanity, the whole mass threw itself grovelling on the pavement of the parvis, and, with outstretched hands and streaming eyes, joined in one universal cry of "Mercy, mercy!"

At this moment it was observable that the king made a feeble movement as if to rise in his chair, but the chancellor restrained him with words and gestures which seemed to satisfy the unhappy prince. He nodded with a look of vacant intelligence, and those who were near enough heard him murmur, as if to himself, "Ay, ay, they must be frightened to be kept in any order! My poor Parisians understand nothing but blows."

The Archbishop of Rheims had meanwhile risen, and in this respectful attitude received an enormous parchment, folded in the form of a letter, with the massive leaden seal upon it whence such instruments derive the designation of boules, or bulls, and which was handed to him by the treasurer of the cathedral. With all the submission evinced by the populace, and the comforting presence of his powerful allies, the prelate was obviously but ill at ease in his task. His hands trembled nervously and his lips grew very white, as he elevated the document over his mitre, and then, reverentially kissing it, he opened the folds as slowly and quiveringly as if he were about to let forth the lightnings. The cries for mercy thickened into a deafening and frantic uproar, which the orator of the Sorbonne seemed to enjoy. Certainly there was something of sneering and bitter satisfaction in his visage, and he folded his arms as if to show more emphatically, in his own calmness, contempt for the terrors he had so large a share in inflicting.

The archbishop resumed his courage, after clearing his throat with repeated hems, during which an officer of his train commanded silence, in a loud official voice, which was echoed in a kind of thunder by the knights and armed burghers below. The prelate then read the bull by which the Parisians understood that the Duke of Burgundy and all who favoured him, however secretly, were excommunicated and anathematized, according to the most dreadful forms which ecclesiastical

wnth could devise. As the bull was, of course, in Latin, the multitude could only comprehend, in general, that the reading of those long sonorous sentences deprived them of of the few distinctions which remained to separate them from the beasts of the field. During this ceremony the bells of Notre Dame continued the gloomy chime of the Clamor ad Deum. The Armagnacs all uncovered their heads, and Owen, bending to his saddle-bows, murmured a devout paternoster, to avert any possible share of the malediction from himself. A few moments of agitated silence followed the awful Amen with which the Bishop of Paris and his clergy ratified the condemnation of their flock, or at least of such portion as persisted in their Burgundian heresies.

Owen was almost the first to raise his head again, and his eye reverting to the scholar of the Sorbonne's pulpit, under guidance of a triumphant cry from Renaud Caboche, he perceived that a third person had mounted the gibbet, unobserved in the general absorption. Even the executioner had no eyes for him, he was so busily engaged in his prayers. But Owen's curiosity was so strongly excited by Renaud's exclamation of "'Tis he! Huéline's scholar!" that it was instantly riveted on the stranger.

He was apparently a young man, of remarkably graceful person, in the garb of a class of students known in Paris by the name of "Poor Scholars;" and who were so in reality, for they earned the means of instruction and existence by mendicancy. He wore a long grey mantle and hood, which almost concealed his features; and a pouch, hanging at his girdle for the reception of charitable contributions, confessed this scholastic pauperism.

"Messire Perrinet!" the stranger said, soliciting the attention of the orator of the Sorbonne by tapping him on the shoulder, "you are here to defend the anathema of Master John Petit against all gainsayers! If you are not, as some have made bold to say, the mere mouthpiece and puppet of more learned men who do not care to appear in the matter, having already argued on the contrary side to general conviction—let me have hearing!—let me have hearing, and I will prove as clearly as that the light of heaven illumines all but the blind, that, far from being an heretical error, this thesis of Master John Petit is the most holy, just, and necessary of doctrines!"

The electric effect of these bold words and confrontation can scarcely be credited, even on so impressionable a populace

as that of Paris has in all ages been. Like a million waves moved upward by one sweep of the wind, the whole mass arose from their kneeling posture, and deafening shouts resounded on every hand, "Hear him, hear the poor scholar! —It is not heresy—he will prove it!—the poor scholar will prove it!"

The voice of the poor scholar was rather sweet and musical than powerful, yet every word which he uttered was distinctly heard over the whole concourse, in the hush of curiosity which followed this outburst.

"Yes, my brothers, I will prove it!" he continued, unshaken by the general glare of astonishment with which the Armagnacs gazed at him. "But first, in the name of the church and of our deceased father, Pope Urban V.—now nearly a hundred years rejoicing among the elect—I protest against this shameful misuse of his bull, fulminated against the robbers and free companies who ravaged France in the time of the unfortunate John of Cressy! Which of your subtlest doctors will dare to maintain that it is a sentence of excommunication on the adherents of the Duke of Burgundy —unless it was also a prophecy?"

With the people, it is always more dangerous to fail in a trick than in any fair procedure. The Parisian populace, changeable in its moods as the shadows and lights on a field of corn on a breezy day, passed instantly from the extremity of terror to derision and even defiance. A yell of scorn, mingled with laughter and confused outcries, shook the air at this revelation.

"Aha, messire! said I not so? Has Huéline failed to your trust?" exclaimed Renaud, turning exultingly to the mendicant.

"No, no!—but who is this beardless scholar that dares thus take Danger by the gorget?" said the latter, stretching himself forward, and gazing with such intense anxiety that he pushed the leaden covering from his supposed lost eye, and disclosed the fact that he still possessed it.

Perrinet le Clerc meanwhile turned in great surprise to survey his unexpected antagonist. But the hood, which he wore unusually low, concealed all but the general outline of a noble and very handsome physiognomy, somewhat brown in the complexion, but glowing with a fiery paleness, like that of flames in sunlight, with the fervour and excitement of the spirit within. The depth and sparkle of his eyes rendered their hues doubtful, like those of a dark lake under the noon-

day sky; but the raven glossiness of the long curling hair, which flowed from beneath his hood, and of his eyelashes, made it probable that the orbs they shaded were also black. Beardless he was, in truth, but for a slight moustache which defined his finely cut and haughty upper lip, and which struck Perrinet to be artificial almost as soon as he beheld it.

After a puzzled pause, the orator's vanity supplied him with an explanation of this apparition. He knew that his idle and profligate career induced many of his companions to believe that it was impossible he could be master of the learning necessary to the office he had assumed. He thought that a trick was devised by them to strip him of his borrowed plumes and expose him to the ridicule of the assembly. His pride and audacity were instantly roused by the attempt, and, with an ironical smile and a glance at the rope dangling over the rostrum, he bade his opponent welcome.

The distinguished audience on the platform were so completely taken by surprise, that no one offered any opposition. All were aware of the unlimited privileges claimed by the University, and of its attachment to the Burgundian cause. Its chiefs would be certain, it was thought, to interpose with vigour on behalf of one whom they had probably selected to utter their sentiments. The populace would as certainly side with the University, and a dangerous tumult might arise. Moreover, it seemed such a demonstration of weakness to refuse to hear the arguments which might be alleged against their view of the case, that, even without the apprehension of a popular sedition, the Armagnac leaders would have been puzzled how to interfere. The constable himself, who was well pleased with Perrinet's oration, imagined it would not be difficult for him to crush so young an antagonist; and it was after consulting the eyes of this dignitary that the Bishop of Paris arose, and, with an air of great impartiality, declared that he was perfectly willing to hear any defence that could be offered on behalf of the Duke of Burgundy, satisfied that the hearers would be the more convinced of the fallacy and heresy of the proposition which he had so murtherously maintained. But, for what regarded the mendicant scholar's protest on the promulgation of the bull of Pope Urban against that felonious duke and his adherents, himself, in the name of the clergy of Paris, and of the universal church, informed the people of Paris that nothing could be more fit and proper than its use on the present occasion. The edicts of the spirituality were not like those of the temporal power, but were of eternal

and unrepealable efficacy! And never, since the creation of man, were there known blacker traitors, robbers, murderers, and incendiaries, than Duke John of Burgundy and his adherents!

Sounds like the whistling and rising roar of wind and sea when a storm is coming followed this admission of the unfair use made of an antiquated thunderbolt. Owen himself was already, against his political views, enlisted by his feelings on the side of the stranger. There was much in the slavish tone of the maxims inculcated by the scholar of the Sorbonne which offended his free mountain notions. The Celtic clanship was a very different thing to the feudal vassalage. The latter was in fact the submission of a conquered people to the conquerors; the former, of children to a father. The courage of the stranger, though of a new kind to Owen Tudor, being rather moral than physical, could not fail farther to interest one of his daring character.

The poor scholar accordingly commenced his harangue, in the midst of a general stillness, while Perrinet listened with a contemptuous smile. But his demeanour was very different to his antagonist's, for, after a deep obeisance to the king, he turned to the people! This unwonted respect completed his popularity. The air was rent with a universal shout of "Noel! Noel!"—the joyful cry of the Parisians, who compared every thing good to the festivities of Christmas. But the garb of the poor scholar at once established a magical sympathy between him and the people. They perceived that he was one of themselves.

This impression was soon confirmed. At first, indeed, when he surveyed the immense mass of his expectant audience, the young orator seemed to suffer under a degree of timidity. But it wore off rapidly, and in a few moments his exquisitely clear and musical voice was audible to the remotest parts of Notre Dame.

"The Clamor ad Deum, ye call it!—the uproar of these bells that tingles like light against the vaults of heaven!" he exclaimed. "O ye bells of Notre Dame! sweet and melancholy voices of this vast pile, whose walls are misty with the sighs of ages!—shall I tell ye wherefore indeed ye should clamour to the skies? Yea, sirs! the earth should cry aloud to its God for vengeance, not for the injuries inflicted on one man, but on all humanity! It is the cry of thy brother, Cain of power! It is man who shrieks to Heaven for justice against his brother man! It is these wronged and trampled myriads

who demand justice on your heads, ye few, ye cruel few! *This* is the true Clamor ad Deum, which let all the earth echo! Let the mountain and valley alike ring with the cry, and God will hear it, far as he sits above us enthroned in the purple light! Therefore I take as my text the words of the Psalmist—'*Quousque, Domine!*' How long, O Lord, indeed!—for we cannot much longer endure our miseries!"

Having thus skilfully destroyed even the effect of the dolorous chime, the poor scholar proceeded in the division of his subject, according to the customary form of orators in that age; but something new and extraordinary was soon discerned in its evolvement even by the rudest of that half-savage populace.

"I will not follow you, Master Perrinet le Clerc, in your illogical manner of attacking when you should have defended!" he said. "It was not your business to prove that my lord the Duke of Burgundy is a tyrant, but that my late lord the Duke of Orleans was *not* one! Neither would that have mattered much to the point in dispute if you had proved that it is not lawful to slay or depose a tyrant—which I affirm that it is, and will maintain against the thunder itself!—for then should I know that the wielder is tyrant of the universe as ye are tyrants of the earth; a blasphemy that until then I will not believe! But you shall not draw from my premises what I contentedly do from yours; for, if it be not lawful to slay or depose a tyrant, and my lord the Duke of Burgundy is one, why do ye urge the king and nobles of France to these enterprises against him? But I will prove the proposition is true, and that it doth in no way affect my lord, Duke John the *Fearless!*"

Perrinet le Clerc gnawed his lips and waxed livid with shame and anger on finding himself thus fairly enmeshed in his own argument, which a shout of laughter from the sharp-witted Parisians convinced him was fully perceived.

"Nay, Master Perrinet!" continued the young orator, "rather rejoice than be ashamed, if I confute your pernicious sophisms! Why should the children of science labour to uphold the supremacy of force over reason—of matter over mind? What insolent supremacy do not these nobles and men of the sword usurp over wisdom and virtue, the only real superiorities? In what contemptuous light do they not regard the professors of humanizing arts? Leave them to their own, and the race of the destroyers will soon be destroyéd!"

After this apostrophe, the Burgundian orator returned to

the topic which he had announced he should in the first place discuss. "Ah, noble Duke John, well named the Fearless! much need have I now of some spark of thy fiery spirit to animate me!" he exclaimed, gazing up at the proposition nailed to the gibbet. "I, that am to show the lawfulness of destroying tyrants in the presence of nearly all the worst of those under whose sway our miserable land is perishing! For, among ye all, Armagnac knights and nobles! which of ye is not red with the blood of France, or glittering in her spoils? Which of ye hath not the widow's curse on your heads, the orphan's shrieks pealing to Heaven against ye? Cruel men! ye have never forgotten that ye are the conquerors, and that we are the conquered; that ye are Franks, and we are Gauls! It is therefore that the poor commonalty of France compassionate her miseries, while in all ages ye have exulted in the bloody revelry of her ruin! Alas, we are the children of the desolate land—she is our mother! To you she is only a rich and defenceless prey."

The nobles and knights present gazed at each other in mute and indignant surprise, while the people responded around in strange murmurs. Often had the populace of Paris listened to the ravings of their partisan demagogues, but never to so general a doctrine as this, which yet flashed like conviction on every heart! Owen himself—a son of the conquered—felt a thrill glide through his veins. It was a vanquished people—and no longer a mean and despised populace, with which he was called upon to sympathize. Such is the magic of the human voice when it speaks in earnestness; it gives an impression of truth to the wildest utterances!

"But why should I accuse ye of tyranny, tyrants?" continued the audacious orator. "Your anxiety to defend its cause, to persuade men that its crimes should not be punished—confess a consciousness which needs not accusation! And why should I assail your doctrine with words, when a natural and inborn feeling of the human heart arises to confute it!—when the first free motion of the arm of the serf, when the gleam of his eye beneath your strokes, assert the thesis ye condemn with the irrefragable logic of nature? Trample it, crush it, heap mountains on it as ye do, and have, and shall, still this eternal hatred survives, deep glowing in the bosom of the nations—to burst some day in a volcanic flame which shall devour earth! When, I know not! But the day shall come! The patience, neither of Heaven nor of man, lasts for ever!

But why should I prophesy woes? Are there not enow at hand? Let the times to come fulfil themselves!

"If I have fallen asleep on the shores of the unknown; if from the murmurings of its ocean I have shaped voices of clear and dreadful utterance, not on thy head, unhappy king, fall the vengeance due! Already the angel of wrath has emptied his vials on it! What fate more terrible than thine, O king! to hang for ever enchained over the fathomless abyss of madness, or plunged in its roaring chaos? Let us weep, brothers! The people are tender-hearted as women; let us weep for our unhappy king! And do they accuse us and our generous duke, Burgundians, whose eyes are streaming thus, of working our king to madness by spells and horrible incantations? Say ye that the mediciner, Jean de Troye, bewitched him with charmed drugs, at the instigation of the royal John? My friends, Jean de Troye bewitched him only by telling him the truth, for our king loves the people; and we of Burgundy most of all require him to be sane, for he hath ever preferred us when he was so! Well he knew that the House of Orleans had conspired his destruction and the seizure of his crown, and that they will never rest until they have effected it, or are themselves destroyed! Ancient prophecies assure it! and never did John of Burgundy prove himself a truer kinsman and subject than when he slew the traitor who was so near to our king's heart only to strike it more securely!

"Perrinet! you define tyranny to be the unlawful exercise of the king's authority: you say that Monsieur Louis of Orleans was justly entitled to exercise it when my lord the king was indisposed, and his son of such tender years! But if ye ask me for a definition of tyranny—I say, look round on France! It is written in gory hieroglyphs throughout her length and breadth! And it was the rule of the Duke of Orleans that brought us to this pass; or deem ye that, when the convulsions of agony toss the coverings from the sick man's sores, it is the exposure which causes his suffering! Doth it not rather lay them open to the chirurgeon's healing eye. But ye will have none of him! The robbers who despoiled the traveller are to have the care of his wounds, and for cooling unguents to pour poison and vitriol into them!

"It is thus they argue who reject the Duke of Burgundy, and turn to the Armagnacs for succour to France! Look at her now!—to what a condition have they brought her! In every hand a knife is bared against a brother's breast! In

every heart, as in a witch's caldron, seethe wrath, fear, vengeance, and despair! An insupportable ache is in every soul! All have either lost—or fear to lose—all! And, while we thus mangle and rend one another, in the distance couches the leopard of England!—the leopard whose claws have so often streamed with our blood! Ah, madmen!—nay, I honour ye too much with that title—ye have not the excuse of madness! One consolation only remains to us!—This grisly beast will avenge us, the oppressed and miserable commonalty of France! We perish, but our destroyers perish with us!"

After this startling exordium, the Burgundian orator proceeded with his harangue in a more regular manner, commencing with his promised defence of the thesis of Master John Petit. Whether that learned doctor's proposition is in reality so damnable and heretical as it was declared by the scholar of the Sorbonne, we leave to the casuists; but never was the grand argument which the dagger of Brutus practically enforced, more eloquently expounded and maintained, than by this mendicant scholar! His inspiration was drawn, it might be, from remote wells of antiquity, or he was possibly one of those lofty eminences of intellect which catch the light long before the lower regions of earth are illuminated; but rarely, until then, had the Parisians listened to an eloquence at once so popular and magnificently poetical, so fraught with antique learning, vivified by the fire of a natural enthusiasm—a fervid tenderness and generosity of spirit, which poured its pathetic glory over all it touched.

It was the overflow of a sublime and daring revery, as yet meditated only by a few of the capacious minds of the age—an assault on feudality itself! The populations of the middle ages suffered under all the complicated miseries of tyranny, without knowing it by that name. They had formed no abstract idea of it from their actual miseries and beastlike subjection, imputing their sufferings at various periods to the various factions which more immediately inflicted them—which governed! But the broad glance of the poor scholar's intellect was united with a singular power of personifying and grouping, under striking lights, the most abstract conceptions. His discourse might have been styled an ancient "Rights of Man," expounded with the warmth and passion of a poet and of a partisan—the disdain and hatred of intellect oppressed by power! The light of a future age seemed poured, for a period, over the dark and brutish multitude. Men

generalized their particular wrongs and sufferings, enlightened by an orator who seemed familiar with the forms of the wide and all-embracing tyranny of the feudal government, and comprehended that it was a system, and not a faction merely, that crushed them into the dust!

The contrast between natural and studied eloquence has seldom been more vividly displayed than on this occasion. Perrinet le-Clerc's cold and elaborate catalogue of the woes which he ascribed to the ambition of the Duke of Burgundy, faded into colourlessness in contrast with the terrific pictures raised by the imagination of the new artist, of woes which he ascribed to the tyranny of the Armagnacs. Yet they scarcely exceeded the actual state of things in a country abandoned as a prey to every lawlessness, burdened by insupportable taxes, ravaged within and without! But, miserable as they were, until then the people seemed never to have felt such pity for themselves, or to have known how pitiable they were!

The cruelty and injustice of the feudal dominion had probably been experienced in some bitter sort by the orator, individually. But few of all the multitude had not suffered under its barbarous sway in some manner. The lands, the seas, the rivers, the gates of cities, the very heavens themselves seemed to belong to the ruling classes of France, so extensive and insatiable were the rights to which they pretended! With what quivering hearts, and flushing cheeks, and fiercely sparkling eyes, did the multitude follow those words of burning wrath and indignation in which the poor scholar delineated their deplorable condition!

But the orator showed himself indeed too far beyond his age, when, in heightening his effects by contrast, he gave utterance to a vision of the happiness and loveliness of liberty! Beautiful, in truth,—more beautiful than the noblest dream of antiquity,—was that early inspiration of the divine frenzy which, in so many ages, has animated the loftier spirits of the world. Liberty, equality, fraternity!—words which have moved the earth—were not on the lips, but they were in the essence of the splendid dream which the young orator discoursed in glowing poetry to that strange, but fascinated audience! The golden age of the world returned—the spell of eloquence made paradise breathe around—and the dark, unwholesome parvis of Notre Dame, choked in with narrow streets and towering roofs, vanished in some marvellous radiance!

Neither Armagnac nor Burgundian had much reason to

rejoice, for a time, in this effusion. The people felt that their sanguinary feuds were not needed in the earthly Eden imaged forth by their orator. But the partisan reappeared in the turn which he gave to the tumultuous and sorrowful passions he had excited. He declared that alone, of all the princes of France, the Duke of Burgundy had the public good at heart, and was determined to abolish the oppressions and iniquities under which the people groaned. He needed but the power of which he had been unjustly deprived! Ever had he been the friend of the poor and oppressed;—his hotel, in Paris, had always been their refuge, as his court was still, at Dijon! They could not have forgotten how he had always lent a favourable ear to any arguments addressed to him by the chiefs of the commonalty; and, above all, to those of Jean de Troye, that virtuous leader, who abolished the octroi on provisions entering Paris, and had nigh obtained the royal signature to a decree making all men free alike throughout the countries of France!

The mention of this name produced a singular effect among the populace. Sighs and murmurs were audibly mingled, for it was one which provoked conflicting opinions and sentiments. Jean de Troye had always been the least popular of the demagogues who distinguished themselves in the insurrection of Paris, in the year of grace 1413. He was hated by the monks and priests in general, who had great influence with the people—doubtless for some good reason! The Burgundian nobles and knights liked him but little better than those of the Armagnac faction. In the brief duration of his power he had managed to offend all parties of the oppressors.

The poor scholar paused during this interruption, and there was something of contempt in the expression of anguish which, for a moment, darkened his countenance, and shadowed the light of its enthusiasm.

"Let us speak no more of Jean de Troye, then, since ye have not yet learned to love those better who serve than those who flatter ye!" he continued, mournfully. "Ah, Parisians, vain, fickle, heartless nation! when will ye learn that first lesson of men deserving to be free? No more of this, neither!—Let us speak of the Duke of Burgundy!—But first, tell me, are you satisfied or not that it is lawful to destroy tyrants, since how else can tyranny be destroyed?"

The deafening "Yea, messire!" which replied, made many of the Armagnac chiefs and counsellors start from their seats in alarm.

"Why, then, need I defend Duke John on the charge of murther and assassination brought against him for the death of the Duke of Orleans?" continued the orator—and yet hurriedly, as if the subject were little pleasing to himself. "He perished by a just doom—for he governed, and we were miserable! And do men humbly inquire of the wolf in what trap he will be pleased to fall, by what arrow he will be pierced, from what lurking-place we must dart the javelin? He perished!—let him pass away among the shadows of his ancestors!—what is there of marvellous about him or his fate? All of them are bathed either in their own gore or in the gore they have shed! The fiends will note nothing singular in the apparition of Louis of Orleans! When was it otherwise with any of the race of our kings—of our destroyers, rather?—And sayest thou, Perrinet, that it is heresy to slay tyrants? Which of ye, ye hideous kings, is not eternally slain by the justice of God?"

And the orator stretched his arms in an attitude which seemed almost to give life to the crowned statuary over the cathedral gates—to compel them before him in the dark shadows of their guilt—for it was growing towards dusk, and their diadems glowed golden while their forms were sinking fast into obscurity.

"Is it thou, Clovis, founder of the monarchy! whose regal robes are dyed so deeply in a brother's blood?—Or thou, Hugh Capet! ungrateful usurper of thy master's seat?—Or thou, Philip Augustus! who didst wring from the consuming heart of Jacques de Molay the curse which will in times to come consume thy race? Towers of the Temple, will ye not yet behold it?—Heresy to slay tyrants, Perrinet!—Why, then, David, that slew the boasting giant!—Deborah, that betrayed Sisera (ah, treason indeed, when death wooed with the accents of love!)—Judith, that slew Holofernes, were heretics!—When hath the church called them so?

"Hear me, Loupgarou, varlet of the hangman of Paris! thou mere result of oppression, half idiot, half wolf!" continued the poor scholar, turning to the hideous attendant of Capeluche, "Wherefore didst thou receive this name of thine?—Better than thyself, perchance, I know!—Because thy childhood was spent wandering and untended, in this great city, like a savage cub in the woods! Because thou wert sent into the world, half-fashioned, body and mind, amidst the terrors and agonies of thy wretched mother, in a public presence, in the Place de Grève! whither she had rushed to

shriek for mercy on thy father, condemned to the boiling caldron as a coiner of false moneys!—Thus wert thou thrown by a rough wave on the flinty shores of the world! Like an ill-planted tree hast thou grown—notched and deformed alike in body and in soul! And for the crimes which thy untaught and brutalized nature will lead thee to commit—even for what themselves have done!—some day they will hang, or burn, or boil, or stone thee out of existence! Is this justice, Loup-garou?"

The varlet's countenance worked strangely during this address; and a vague terror crossed the minds of the more reflecting portion of the spectators, who for the first time saw, as when the spirit of creation moved over chaos, the influence of mind on matter! The impression was deepened when, closing his fanglike teeth, the varlet muttered, with the intuitive leap of savage thought, "Vengeance!"

"Vengeance, ay!—but on whom, if not on the oppressors,—and who are they?" continued the poor scholar, and he paused an instant, while a confused murmur floated darkly among the crowd. "The Armagnacs, the Armagnacs! the accursed Gascons!—The Duke of Burgundy loves the people."

"Yea, he doth, he doth!—the Duke of Burgundy loves the people!" exclaimed the impassioned orator. "Ever hath he identified himself with your wrongs—your rights! Ah, he loves us—the royal, the valiant, the fearless John, he loves us! What hath he not done to show it!—He hath not spared us even his own blood—the blood of the tyrant Orleans! And do ye dare to tell us, Armagnacs, that he sides with the destroyers of France, the everlasting enemies of our name, the extinguishers of our glory, the English? Never, never, never believe it, Parisians!—He thirsts but for the moment when, with all the power of France arrayed—breast with breast—brother with brother—we shall stand against those fierce islanders, and prove that we are—not their equals, but their masters!

"Cruel England! remorseless nation! that, restless and discontented even as the waves that howl around thy shore! seekest to make all other lands so!—Land of Wicliff, whose thoughts have gone forth and will not let men pause!—ah, leave us, leave us our peaceful dances under the verdant chestnut!—our radiant wines! What need we with thy gloomy aspirations, that climb the stars only to fall in more intolerable vacancy? Leave us to repose, for in the van of

thy armies marches Thought, the foe of slumber!—We should slumber, friends!—We are all men, but slaves! This strange light shall not come among us to dispel the phantasmagoria wherewith our masters have peopled the heavens themselves with terrors! Alas, even those perchance among us who deem they behold the light of a coming day, have but gazed so intently on the sun of the past, that we behold a mimicry of his glory in the darkness!"

The mention of the name of Wicliff, with such a close, produced a very unfavourable effect for the orator, not only with the Armagnac ecclesiastics, but with the doctors of the Burgundian University. The poor scholar continued without appearing to notice the circumstance.

"But I was to speak of the Duke of Burgundy—let me speak! It is true that at the battle of Nicopolis, then scarcely in the earliest summer of manhood, he did the work of autumn; and, insensible with wounds, was made the prisoner of the infidel! It is true that, gazing on his powerful brows, shadowed with fate, the Turkish astrologer preserved him by predicting that more damage should happen through his life, than death, to Christendom! But are we to believe that the Spirit of God inspired a false pagan, unless it were to the confusion of his race? The Saracen saved John the Fearless, but to the destruction of his own kind; for he hath sworn that, as soon as he has calmed our dissensions, he will undertake a warlike pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to redeem the Holy Sepulchre, with such of the princes of Europe as love glory better than their beds! Our Lady and our dear Lord inspired the astrologer of the Turks to save him—and to this end! But, for the English, my lord intends only shame and vengeance to them, for the disasters and ruin they have brought on France!"

The populace roared with fury like a herd of famished wild beasts at these words, and the constable himself applauded, waving his massive sword as if leading on a universal charge! Armagnac and Burgundian for a moment were one.

But this general feeling prevailed not long when the poor scholar proceeded in his vindication of the Duke of Burgundy. There was much in the reckless daring and supremacy of Duke John's character to excite that wild admiration which all that is tempestuous and terrible stirs in the human breast. And the mendicant scholar's enthusiasm was echoed in the hearts of the masses, who only require to have their passions roused to believe! The dreadful and doubtful doctrine of tyran-

nicide, in the eloquent language of the Burgundian orator, became a necessary and sublime duty, surrounded by every grandeur of thought and feeling! It was thus that he defended the cruel homicide of the Duke of Orleans, and traced John the Fearless through every stage of his blood-stained career, giving the glory of patriotism to its most dreadful excesses. A powerful effect was obviously produced among the populace, which increased almost to madness as the orator put the last touches on his noble limning.

"Perrinet, ye say the duke denies peace, notwithstanding the miseries and disgrace we suffer from the continuance of this wolfish war, where brother rends brother!" he exclaimed. "Ah, kind people of Paris! how are ye abused! The false Armagnacs deceive ye; and therefore am I chiefly here, under sanctity of the privilege of my mother, the University, to tell ye all that, thrice, during this month, has my lord of Burgundy offered peace, on the sole and most equitable condition that he and my lady the queen should be admitted to the councils of the king, who, well he knows, is not able at this time to govern of himself! Thus only can the many mischiefs intended be prevented! Thrice, during one *little* month; and yet, Parisians! the scholar of the Sorbonne tells you—the Duke of Burgundy rejects all terms of peace!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE GRAND CHATELET.

It is not easy to describe the effect of this announcement. The Armagnacs had carefully kept the fact of the proffered peace a secret, well knowing, from the terms demanded, that it was in reality merely a bait to catch the humour of the populace; and their orator had solemnly assured the Parisians that the Duke of Burgundy was resolved against any proposals of peace.

The wild uproar and confused cries which followed the revelation seemed to alarm even the Constable d'Armagnac himself. He glanced irresolutely at the spears of the knights, and then at Perrinet le Clerc, as if doubtful on which force to rely. Perrinet himself seemed overwhelmed with rage and confusion at this public discomfiture.

"The Burgundian lies, and I have spoken the truth!" he shouted, at length. "My lords of the king's council! I call ye to avouch your own instructions, and to witness that spoken the truth!"

"Ye say well, ye say well, good clerk!" said the constable. "We were mad to listen to this mad Burgundian!—But he shall not escape unchastised!—All that you have said we do aver and maintain! It was insult and not peace that the murtherer offered us! All who say so, rise!"

The Archbishop of Rheims, with the rest of the prelates, and, in fact, all the illustrious audience on the platform, except the king, immediately arose in response to this appeal.

"It is well!—And now, scholar, where are those who do avouch the truth of your words?" said the constable. His wrath had for once overcome his prudence, or he thought the occasion a good one to strike terror. "By Him who died on the rood! I will deem them the real traitors who support thee, and punish them for thee!"

"I demand the avouchment and protection of my venerable mother, the University,—which hath promised it!" replied the poor scholar, turning with a confident look to the group of doctors and professors.

A hesitating and very discreetly under-toned murmur among the learned dignitaries seemed to take the part of the Burgundian orator. The students, who from time immemorial were riotous sticklers for their privileges, raised a louder clamour, seconded by the deep surge-like mutter of the populace.

"Messires of the University!" exclaimed Perrinet le Clerc, quivering with malice and wrath, "surely ye will not take the part of a wretch who has openly professed paganism—and the doctrines of Johannes Wicliffus!"

The terror of the menace uttered by the constable disposed the Burgundian doctors to be glad of an opportunity of escape from the performance of the promise of protection which it is very likely they had made. Moreover, the youthful orator had so far exceeded the bounds of the protest which they had probably engaged to countenance, that the silence which followed was natural and excusable.

"Do ye desert me, reverend sires?" said the undaunted scholar. "Why, then, I demand the protection of the church!—I am on its hearth in this parvis of Notre Dame! If that be denied me, Parisians, I appeal to you!—The people are the last appeal!"

"By holy St. Denis, and by this sword of mine office! I swear, I do not value all this rabble, nor all your privileges, so much at any time as to note they stand between the justice of the king and his offenders!" shouted the constable. "Traitor, rouse your fellows to do their worst, for by the

same I doubly swear, that, unless some one that *is neither* churchman nor base-born—unless some one fit to do *battle* with a nobly-born champion—appears in thy behalf—I *will* hang thee on this gibbet, as a warning to all sedition-mongers, in spite of all Paris and Burgundy to boot!"

A silence followed these dreadful words throughout the multitude. The bold orator himself seemed a little shaken, and extended his arms with an imploring gesture to the doctors and magnates of the University. But all were silent with mingled emotions of fear and doubt.

"Renaud!—Where is Huéline?—What madness is this?" gasped the mendicant, to his young companion.

"I know not!—why ask you, messire? Shall we draw our knives and shout 'Rescue!'" returned Renaud Caboche.

"We are unarmed—it were madness—and it is impossible that this can be!" said the mendicant, partly to himself, as if endeavouring to refute some dreadful thought which arose in his mind. "It is madness!—and must this glorious creature perish—and we live?"

"Capeluche, make ready!—And, Montjoye, sound an alarum!" exclaimed the angry constable. "If none of the quality I have named appear in his behalf, he shall make but a short shrive, for I will see him dangling or ever the king goes to supper!"

The executioner himself seemed unwilling to perform his office, and it was not until the constable repeated his command that he took up the rope. It lay coiled like a serpent at his feet, and with all his efforts he seemed for a time unable to open it out. The king-at-arms obeyed more readily, and, raising his silver trumpet, blew a blast which resembled a shriek, and was the usual point of war to summon aid.

A deep and deadly silence followed this dismal trumpet-cry. The populace made a faint movement, but a panic terror seemed to come over them—and the fearful silence returned. The scholar of the Sorbonne uttered a loud laugh of derision and rage. He had amply avenged his blighted laurels!

"It cannot be, my reverend sirs! that ye will thus meanly behold your privileges violated!" exclaimed the scholar, with a degree of dizziness and horror in his tones. "I did not think that life was precious to me—yet to die thus! Sire, King of France! it becomes not your royalty to suffer this lawless cruelty to one of your subjects!"

The king, it was obvious, looked with earnest wildness at

his suppliant, and turned to the chancellor. The subtle *Henri* de Marle immediately whispered words which seemed to satisfy him. He nodded mechanically, smiled, and began gnawing the jewelled knobs of his sceptre.

"Aha, none vouch for him!" said the constable, with a fierce and yet anxious glance over the multitude. "Even these mutinous dogs of Paris do not bark for him!—Let a priest be sought—Capeluche, make ready."

"*It is* my duty,—and we cannot always unite duty with pleasure, messire!" said the executioner, reluctantly preparing a noose; and for the first time it seemed as if a conviction of the full danger and terror of his position rushed upon the mendicant scholar. He uttered a shriek which rent the ears and hearts of almost all who heard, and, turning with wild vehemence to the people, he called aloud, "Save me, for the love of our merciful Lady!—Will none aid me, that have hazarded all in your cause?"

There was another deadly silence—and Capeluche approached his victim with the rope. At this instant, when all seemed lost, the mellow note of a mountain bugle was heard! —Yielding to the strong feeling of admiration and pity which worked in his warm Welsh blood, Owen Tudor snatched his horn from the saddle-bow where it usually hung, and answered the heraldic summons with a blast that sufficiently expressed defiance and aid!

There was a moment's pause of doubt and astonishment among the people, and then a shout arose which made what might be called an airquake! It seemed to shake the massive towers of *Notre Dame* itself.

"*Your pardon*, noble constable! but he doth not deserve to *die the death* of the red fox, nor shall while mine arm can lift a lance!" said the Chevalier Sauvage, spurring his horse so as to produce himself into full view.

"Knight! who art thou, if not some glorious phantom sent to mine aid, by Him who defends the right?" exclaimed the poor scholar, springing from his aghast attitude in a wild revulsion of feeling.

"What art thou, indeed, masqued in this strange array?" said the Constable d'Armagnac, laying hand on his sword, and gazing around as if in expectation of an immediate outbreak, of which this apparition was to be the signal.

"My name is of foreign sound—but I am a knight, and full nobly born!" replied the descendant of Arthur, raising the bars of his helmet "therefore Sir Constable, I pray you re-

[illegible] of like degree, who [illegible]

[illegible] and avouched—let me [illegible] astonished gaze at his [illegible] to descend from the [illegible] instead of obstruction, [illegible] Bermet le Clerc, furious [illegible] revenge, suddenly clutched [illegible]

[illegible] Burgundian, thus unchas- [illegible] his antique suit of steel! [illegible] and, drawing [illegible] his student's habit, [illegible] and cowering oppo- [illegible] the furious passions in [illegible] that of the poor [illegible] he needed only the [illegible] the weighty [illegible] on his head [illegible] the stones of the parvis, [illegible] Then, dashing on his [illegible] drew sparks of fire around [illegible] Burgundian scholar [illegible] the engine of death. A [illegible] and in an [illegible] away by a mighty [illegible] confusion and uproar [illegible] the scholar seemed [illegible] the dense masses [illegible] in petrified amaze- [illegible]

[illegible] disguised traitor!" [illegible] Sir Tanegay [illegible] his archers to advance, [illegible] as were nearest, rushed upon Owen. [illegible] a scene of con- fusion and [illegible] counteracted these objects than a violent resistance. [illegible] were seized with terror, and, apprehensive of a general massacre, took to flight. But their numbers, and the attempts of the guards posted at the different outlets to obstruct their retreat, produced a ter- rific scene of tumult and conflict, amidst which the object of pursuit disappeared.

[illegible] while, Owen found himself surrounded by a rush of

cavalry, and, remembering that he did not come to France to *fight* the Armagnacs, he attempted an explanation. But his voice was drowned in the universal uproar; and finally he found himself under the disagreeable necessity of yielding as a prisoner to the Provost of Paris, or of battling his way through a thick squadron of spears, and axes, and crossbows. All his assurances that he was a knight and a noble, were answered with cries of "A masquer, a masquer!"—"a Burgundian villein disguised as a knight!" And, very reasonably concluding that he had better wait for some calmer opportunity of asserting his rank and dignity, he informed the provost that he was willing to go wherever he pleased, and prove himself to be as he had said—a knight and a noble—and by no means a Burgundian. In the confusion, the provost seemed to notice only that he surrendered, and ordered him instantly to be removed to the seat of his jurisdiction—the fortress of the Grand Châtelet.

In a very brief period, Owen Tudor found himself the solitary tenant of a chamber in this edifice—the terror of all the evil-doers, political and otherwise, of Paris. Thither he was tumultuously escorted by the soldiery of the provost, and a rolling flood of fugitives, pressing to escape through the dismal archway which traversed the whole file like a tunnel. The Châtelet commanded the communication between the shores of the river, which it could at any time cut off by closing its narrow and massive gates. The confidence and sympathy existing between the Parisians and their rulers, may be inferred from the fact that the rush of the mob in this direction was caused by fears that the constable would order them to be closed to effect his massacre.

The lodging which Owen had procured for himself proved, on examination, but very little to his taste. It was a small circular chamber, with walls of bare granite, furnished with a wooden stool, a couch of similarly soft materials, and a coarse rug for a coverlet. An opening in the thickness of the wall, so narrow and elevated that it was not thought necessary to secure it with the usual iron lattice, afforded the "stray eaglet of Snowdon," as the family bard styled him, his first glimpses from a dungeon.

The prospect without was no great improvement on that within. The tower in which he was immured seemed hung to the main building like a lantern on a watchbox, judging by its similarity to one on the opposite side of a gateway below, whose narrowing base terminated in a round stone knob

the air. Some ghastly old mutilated statue, that looked like a corpse in a stone shroud, decorated the centre of the archway, between two useless pillars—above which arose the main pile of the building, flanked by a square and a round tower, both battlemented, and guarded by the arches of Taneguy Duchâtel.

Below, was an open space, which seemed used as a fish market; for it was strewed with baskets of that glistering viand, and tenanted by a chattering, brawling, ragged throng, principally of women, with faces tanned to the hue of ripe chestnuts, feet and legs bare to the knee, and clad in coarse petticoats streaming with weeds and water, as if they were just drawn from the depths of the Seine, with their prey in their arms. Beyond the market-place, a series of dark and exceedingly narrow streets could be distinguished, twisted together like a coil of muddy eels. The designations of this quarter, indeed, might sufficiently describe it. The Valley of Misery, the Tripe-Market, and the famous, or rather infamous, street, Trop-va-qui-dur, were included in its precincts. The view was terminated by a singular and very lofty tower, which Owen afterwards learned was that of St. Jacques-de-la-Boucherie—the great shambles, or Boucherie of ancient Paris, lying amidst this French St. Giles.

After a brief survey of these accompaniments of his situation, Owen had leisure to wonder at himself. By what strange magic of eloquence had he been cajoled into making his appearance in Paris as an antagonist to the cause he came to support? Fraught with so knightly and noble a contempt of vassalage and of the lowly born, he could no longer divine by what art the poor scholar won him, in a manner, to identify himself with the insolent Jacquerie of Paris! And yet so singular a fascination lingered with the recollection of the young scholastic phantom, that Owen could not find it in his heart to blame himself utterly for the course he had taken.

Meanwhile, he could not doubt that both parties would consider him as a Burgundian; and he knew enough of the character and achievements of the Provost of Paris to be aware that it was a perilous light in which to stand in his custody. Sir Taneguy was famed for the ferocity of his partisanship with the Armagnacs, and his deadly hatred against the whole faction of the man who murdered his friend and patron, the Duke of Orleans. He was warmly attached to the young dauphin, whose military education was confided to him. These passions, generous and noble in themselves, in-

flamed by his hot Breton blood, had not unfrequently displayed themselves in fearful excesses of revenge and cruelty.

Still Owen's sanguine inexperience persuaded him that he could easily clear his conduct, and re-establish himself with the Armagnacs, if he could only win an opportunity of explanation. For the first time, he remembered with satisfaction the diploma of knighthood which he had received from the English herald, Paon, and the record of his achievements on the Vire. He hoped that these documents were safe in the possession of the faithful Rhys ap Goronwy—and hoped on, until the door of his aërial dungeon flew back, and Rhys was thrust, or rather flung, into the chamber!

The good squire's news were even worse than might have been augured from such an arrival. When Rhys beheld his lord engaged in a scuffle, he made the most violent efforts to come to his assistance. But the rush of the fugitive populace, and the conflict around him, not only prevented his advance, but swept him out of the parvis into one of the streets that debouched into it. In the midst of his struggles to return, a one-eyed beggar, who had with difficulty reached the spot, addressed him, as it seemed to Rhys, with great vehemence and entreaty, and in a variety of French dialects, exhorting him to flight. By his gesticulations, and continual pointing at the baggage on his steed's crupper, Rhys understood that he warned him his property was in danger. But, frantic at seeing his lord led away captive, he slighted the caution; and he supposed it was in the midst of his renewed efforts to join him that some thieves managed to lighten his steed of almost all the valuables it carried! To crown his misfortunes, when finally he forced his way to the gates of the Grand Châtelet, the guards could not, or would not, understand that he was the vassal of their prisoner, and desired to share his fate, whatever it might be. An archer on the barbacan discharged an arrow at him, which killed his poor steed; and he himself would probably have shared the same fate, but for the arrival of a personage who seemed to be the captain of the fortress—and who spoke Welsh! Not the pure congenial Welsh of Wales, which, according to Rhys, was sweeter than the music of a running stream to a thirsty hunter on a hill of sunburned furze!—but such Welsh as was spoken by the Irish and Scots.

The captain of the fortress was addressed by the name of Sir Taneguy, which Owen remembered was that of the Provost of Paris. He questioned him with the utmost severity con-

[illegible] was—when he came—where he [illegible]—what houses he frequented [illegible] accomplices—a torrent of queries [illegible] to which confused to answer with [illegible] he was put on his guard by the [illegible] and accusations of the knight. [illegible] the internal politics of France; [illegible] that his [illegible] came to serve a party [illegible] who were masters in Paris. To his amaze- [illegible] that he was seized as a Burgundian, in the [illegible] popular outbreak.

[illegible] Rhys, and [illegible] the truth of all the [illegible]. Nothing that he said was believed; [illegible] the provost worked himself into a towering pas- [illegible] before [illegible] that he would have the [illegible] scholar's head, if he were alive and in Paris, before [illegible] sunset; and that, on the following morning, he would [illegible] Rhys and his [illegible] unless they confessed the whole [illegible] the conspiracy, and gave up the scholar to punish- [illegible] This doom he ordered him to communicate to his [illegible] that he might make up his mind on the subject, [illegible] declared that it should be proclaimed throughout Paris, [illegible] that the good effect of the example might not be lost [illegible] the friends and supporters of the criminals.

CHAPTER XII.

HUELINE DE PROYE.

Owen Tudor spent his first night in Paris, with what degree of satisfaction may be imagined. Once more his confidence in his prophecy sustained a severe shock. No condition of the warnings it contained seemed included, and yet he was evidently in a pass of mortal jeopardy, and, far from becoming the sire of a race of kings, was threatened with a degrading and horrible termination to his career!

The rage of the imprisoned eagle, when it beats its wings to pieces against the bars of its cage, was in the heart of the young mountain chief, while he passed the night traversing the narrow limits of his dungeon. He felt it scarcely possible to explain his conduct even to his faithful and confiding vassal; how [illegible] the suspicious and enraged Armagnacs? His [illegible] all lost, irretrievably, no doubt. The repu- [illegible] ves of Paris was already fixed. They were

known not to be bunglers at their work. Owen had little doubt that the companionable beggar, whose one-eyed blindness he himself observed was a sham, had helped to despoil the trusting Rhys. His only hope was, that the Armagnacs would be stirred to activity in the search for the stolen goods, by their desire to make some political discovery in the baggage of a supposed emissary of the Burgundians.

But what a light hope was this to be cast into the balance against the terrible possibilities that awaited him! More than the horror of the punishment denounced, its ignominy fretted the proud soul of the Welsh chieftain to madness, while Rhys was scarcely disturbed at the prospect of a doom which he was to share with so great and beloved a personage. Moreover, Rhys's superstitious confidence in the prophecy of Glendower was not to be shaken by any refutation whatever, short of actual impossibility.

The morning came, and brought with it but little consolation. The prisoners were, however, treated with civility; and a good breakfast of wine, fruit, and chestnut-bread was brought to them by a gaoler, who appeared to be both deaf and dumb, for he made no reply to the impatient questionings of Owen. And whatever good omens this treatment might raise, were dissipated by the arrival of two personages whose mere appearance was an assurance of evil. One of them was a summoner of the Court of the Grand Châtelet, in his official robes. The other was the executioner of Paris, Monsieur Capeluche, who wore his usual ornament, in the shape of a rope twisted in an elegant arabesque round his arm.

The summoner delivered himself of his message, in a hard, official, uninterested tone, purporting, merely, that the prisoners were required to appear and present themselves before the bar of the King's Justice of the Grand Châtelet within the space of one hour. Capeluche seemed to have little other business, at the moment, than to take a survey of his future victim, which he very deliberately did, until Owen was exasperated at the length and steadiness of his scrutiny. "See ye aught marvellous in me, churl," he exclaimed, "that ye gaze at me, as at a wild beast chained?"

"Nay, messire," replied the executioner, blandly. "Contrariwise, I do oft wonder why men come to stare at others in your condition, as if it were so rare and amazing a thing to be hung! I am but taking the measure of your drop—you are a gentleman of goodly stature! Continue your repast, I pray you, sir; I am not as a tailor, or a coffinmaker, that must

test his eye with his tape and yard! I thank you, messire!—you need not draw yourself to your full height! I comprehend that I must shorten my dear Choke-Rogue by a loop! Eat, sir," he continued, with a courteous gesture to Rhys, "for you have not long even to live, and time grows precious, like other things, at the moment when we are about to lose it for ever."

"Shall I teach him how wild cats embrace, ap Tudor, lest he live to hang more of his betters?" exclaimed the Welsh esquire.

"Peace, peace, ap Goronwy! his lords will not condemn us, thou seest, unheard!" said Owen, much agitated. "Sir summoner, I will obey instantly, if I may,—but rest assured, if ye put me to the doom ye threaten, thou shalt hang a dead man, for the first time, thou dismal varlet of death!"

"*Not* for the first time, messire—I have hung many men after they were dead!" replied Capeluche, politely. "I am ashamed to differ from so noble a personage—but it is sometimes of consequence that people should rather seem gone one way than another into our glorious inheritance in the other world. Ah, how many owe to me their beatification! How many that in their lives were held for pestilent rogues and perturbers of the peace have owed to me their rank of martyrs and saints with our good Parisians! I promise it, messire, you shall be well mourned, by the women at least—you were made to excite their pity—and our Parisian women are exceedingly kind-hearted! They weep for everybody who is good-looking and seems to deserve his fate, that is, who dies a dog's death like a man! And certes, messire, either I am no judge of men's breeding, or you will not disgrace yours by dying in any other manner."

"Begone, wretch!—I have heard the summons—begone, ere I send thee to keep company with the worst of the slaves thou hast despatched!" exclaimed Owen.

The messenger of the provost seemed glad to make his retreat; but, in spite of this menace, Capeluche lingered. When the summoner was fairly outside the door, he halted in following him, and turned with a singular and anxious stare at the prisoner,—which was reciprocated, but not apparently as he expected. Owen was still more surprised on beholding him raise his hands, clutch them firmly over his head, and mutter, as if it were some mysterious shibboleth, the Burgundian motto, "Je le tiens!"

Owen's uncomprehending look seemed in his turn to sur-

prise the executioner. "Messire," he said, approaching Owen on tiptoe, stretching his long serpent neck, and whispering almost with the hiss of that reptile in his ear, "You may put all the faith remaining on earth in me! My lord the duke well knows me for a faithful Burgundian, notwithstanding I am obliged to hang on the side which is master in Paris! Trust in me—what can I do to serve you? My name is Capeluche—it is another name for fidelity!—Capeluche, King of the Rogues of Paris!—the duke must have spoken of me to you?"

Owen had never spoken to any duke in the whole course of his life, much less on such a topic as this Roi des Ribands, as his title ran in French. He stated as much, and in language by no means complimentary to this strange majesty.

"I am not in the least offended—'rogue, villain, loathsome butcher!'—I perceive your caution," said Capeluche, with marked approbation. "But, noble knight, you will trust in me when I tell you that I have a message to you—from the GRANDE BOUCHERIE!"

"From the Great Shambles?" repeated Owen, in vacant astonishment at the impressive and extremely confidential manner in which these words were uttered.

"From Simon Caboche and Mademoiselle Huéline!" returned the executioner, in the same prodigious and significant tone, though still in a whisper.

"Huéline!—what Huéline?" repeated Owen, forcibly struck with the sound of this melodious and remarkable name, and yet amazed to find it thus used and associated.

Capeluche understood the question as a test of his acquaintance with the personages of whom he spoke, and he readily replied,—

"Mademoiselle Huéline!—the daughter of the mediciner, Jean de Troye—she whom the Armagnacs call, for scorn, the minstreless of the Boucherie, whose lays it is forbidden to all jongleurs, under penalty of the pillory and a bored tongue, to sing in Paris!"

"She who composed the Lament—the farewell to minstrelsy?" said Owen, eagerly.

"'Tis like enough; she is for doing now, and not for talking," replied Capeluche, a little surprised in his turn.

"And who is Simon Caboche?" said Owen, with an anxiety for which he himself would have been at a loss to account.

"Nay, who, of all Paris—and all France to boot—knows not that?" said Capeluche, with a sly smile. "Ask me

test his eye with his tape and yard! [illegible] one-eyed beggar of you need not draw yourself to yo[illegible] every child, as is the hend that I must shorten my [illegible]
Eat, sir," he continued, with [illegible] beggar then?" returned the "for you have not long eve[illegible]
like other things, at the r[illegible] your caution too far; but men's for ever."

"Shall I teach him [illegible] hands!" said Capeluche. "This he live to hang more [illegible] bring to you from the Boucherie—[illegible] Demoiselle Huéline—that you may esquire.

"Peace, peace, [illegible] through me who you are and where-us, thou seest, u[illegible] what news you bring from Arras? And summoner, I w[illegible] not to be dismayed or affrighted into perilous if ye put me [illegible] that, sooner than any harm shall befall so man, for th[illegible] a knight, they, she—for methinks Simon [illegible] the poor scholar was—will surrender him as

"Not [illegible]
after th[illegible] nothing of Simon Caboche—of the Boucherie—asham[illegible] minstreless!" exclaimed Owen, in great vexation; times [illegible] tell them all to work no treason or betrayal on my way [illegible] I am none of their fellowship, and what I did wo[illegible] the pure love of honour and fair play!"
m[illegible]

"Keep to that story on the rack, and the poor youth need p[illegible] be given up; but, alas, very few young persons sustain [illegible] second wrench unblenchingly!" said Capeluche, tenderly. "You seem, indeed, sir knight, to have your story well by heart, and so I will report. Meanwhile, wherever you see a sprig of violet ('tis the only purple we dare to wear now in Paris), rest assured that he who carries it as his cognisance is a friend, and one in whom you may confide."

"Either thou jestest with me, or wouldst betray me!" said Owen, turning disdainfully away. Capeluche stared at him for a moment, and then, shrugging his soldiers, muttered, "Ah, it is a well-shaped neck for the axe!" and retired.

These signs of the rebellious humour of the Parisians, and of the deep-seated conspiracy existing among them against the Armagnac sway, completed Owen's anger at his own imprudence. Neither could it be pleasing to the proud and aspiring Tudor to find himself become the ally of butchers and beggar scholars! All his romantic notions of a poetess, whose lays the refined James of Scotland deemed worthy of translation, vanished in the gross and even horrible ideas associated with the shambles. The minstreless of the [illegible]rie!—the wife, no doubt, of some dreadful master of [illegible], whose very messenger was a hangman, in no wise

ered either to his native traditions of the Druidesses of
to his ideal of the splendid professors of the "gaye
in France.

ng that the hangman had not tendered him a snare,
greatly suspected, his indignation was roused to
contempt by the intention announced of redeem-
at the price of the betrayal of the poor scholar. The
nerous baseness of such a proceeding with one who had
ved their cause so well, increased his abhorrence of every-
thing Burgundian. He thirsted for an opportunity of prov-
ing that he had in reality no sympathy with that mutinous
commonalty whose cause he seemed to have espoused! The
archers who were sent to bring the prisoners before the tri-
bunal of the Grand Châtelet were astonished at the alacrity
with which the strange knight complied with their summons.

Owen was escorted in this mood of impatient anxiety into the great hall in which the Provosts of Paris held their courts. Perhaps in no other European jurisdiction was there ever so singular a union of offices as in this military magistracy; Owen himself was struck with a sense of unfitness when he perceived the judge of the court, clad in complete armour, and seated in an iron chair under a canopy emblazoned with the royal arms of France, which was surrounded by a mingled crowd of men-at-arms, attorneys, and pleaders anxiously awaiting briefs. Robes of silk and coats of steel—ushers and spearmen—serjeants of law with rods, and sergeants of arms with axes—the military bâton and the civil hand of justice laid together on a cushion before the provost—all marked the confusion of a jurisdiction in which law was pronounced through the barred vizor of a helmet.

"A fair morning to you, Sir Springald,—but 'tis like enough to prove your last," said the provost, sternly, as Owen was placed at the bar of his tribunal. "You have brought your Burgundy wares to a bad market, as this great lord and noble knight—in the pink velvet beflowered with golden luces—the Sire de la Trimouille, may at his pleasure unfold."

"The commands, Lord Provost, which I bear from my very good lord the constable are to you—not to the criminals under your judgment," replied the great noble thus introduced, who stood beside the provost's chair in an elegant and courtly attitude, his left hand propped on his haunch so as to display the magnificent mantle to the best advantage, which Sir Taneguy selected as a main article in his characterizatio

[illegible] —[illegible] me who the one-eyed beggar of [illegible] every child, as is the [illegible]"

"[illegible] beggar then?" returned the [illegible]

"[illegible] far: but men's [illegible]" said Capeluche. "This [illegible] the Boucherie—[illegible]—that you may [illegible] are and where-[illegible] Arras? And [illegible] into perilous [illegible] shall befall so, [illegible] methinks Simon [illegible] surrender him as [illegible]"

"[illegible] of Simon Capeluche—of the Boucherie—[illegible]" exclaimed Owen, in great vexation; "[illegible] or betrayal on my [illegible] and what I did [illegible] of honour and fair play!"

"[illegible] the rack, and the poor youth need [illegible] very few young persons sustain the second wrench [illegible]" said Capeluche, tenderly. "[illegible] to have your story well by [illegible] and so I will report. Meanwhile, wherever you see a [illegible] the only purple we dare to wear now in Paris, rest assured that he who carries it as his cognisance is a friend, and one in whom you may confide."

"Either thou jestest with me, or wouldst betray me!" said Owen, turning disdainfully away. Capeluche stared at him for a moment, and then, shrugging his soldiers, muttered, "Ah, it is a well-shaped neck for the axe!" and retired.

These signs of the rebellious humour of the Parisians, and of the deep-seated conspiracy existing among them against the Armagnac sway, completed Owen's anger at his own imprudence. Neither could it be pleasing to the proud and aspiring Tudor [illegible] become the ally of butchers and [illegible] notions of a poet [illegible] deemed worth [illegible] horrible

answered [illegible] science [illegible]

[illegible] which [illegible] loathing [illegible] ing [illegible] treacherous [illegible] served [illegible] thing Burgundian. [illegible] commonalty [illegible] bunch of the [illegible] with which the [illegible]

Owen was [illegible] the great [illegible] court. [illegible] ever so [illegible] tracy: Owen [illegible] when he [illegible] armour. [illegible] with the [illegible] mingled [illegible] anxiously [illegible] ushers and [illegible] sergeants [illegible] hand of [illegible] —all marked [illegible] pronounced [illegible]

"A fair [illegible] enough to prove your [illegible] Owen, was placed at the bar of the tribunal. "You have brought your Burgundy wares to a bad market, as the [illegible] fond [illegible] guilders [illegible] unfold!"

"Those [illegible] Lord Provost, which I [illegible] very [illegible] to you—not [illegible] replied the [illegible] Provost's [illegible]

"Pardon your servant, messire! it is not so unknightly a doom as you seem to apprehend," said Capeluche, with his characteristic politeness and suavity. "Of later years—since these wars began—I have had the honour to hang many gentlemen of the most excellent blood and lineage! There was Messire Louis de Bourdon, whom my lady the queen held in the highest consideration—one but little less pleasant to look upon than your worshipful knighthood—I hung him!"

"Nay, the minion had not so blooming a visage as this one's, were it a trifle less flushed," said the provost, with a mixture of pleasure and trouble in the remembrance of the deed which conjured up a fearful phantom of the avenging Isabeau. "And dost thou remember, Capeluche, how he prayed thee to strangle him, so as not to twist it out of shape? But, were thy beauty a woman's, Burgundian, I would not spare it; for I am that Taneguy who so hates the murderer, your lord, that it angers me worse than a bull at crimson to see aught of the beautiful purple colour which he has made his own! And therefore, Capeluche, no further pause; and, since he will not confess, make carrion of him!"

"Permit me, messire!—it is as soft as a paramour's arms round the neck," said the courteous executioner, offering a noose which he adroitly slipped from his arm. "If you are patient, all will go well. I never put any one to inconvenience in hanging him—much less a gentleman of degree."

"Achieve me then—for I will not die this death!" shouted Owen; and, frantic with despair and rage, he made so sudden and bold a snatch, that he possessed himself of the jewelled sword that hung at the belt of the Lord de la Trimouille. His own he had surrendered to the provost in the parvis of Notre Dame, as a voluntary sign that he intended not resistance. The Lord de la Trimouille uttered an exclamation of alarm, and sprang behind the provost's tribunal, out of reach.

"Marry, must I brain this cockatrice myself? Are you hurt, Messire de la Trimouille, that you leap like a parched chestnut?—I would the dauphin could see how skilled you are in vaulting!" said the provost, scornfully; but laying his hand on the huge spiky mace beside his chair: "Thou art of good metal, by my beard, boy!—And what tongue is this thou speakest?—Is it Breton?"

In his emotion Owen had unwittingly uttered his defiance in his native language.

"It is Welsh—I am a knight of Wales!—I have spoken truly—I come to serve the king of France and the Constable

d'Armagnac against the English, and all of their alliance, to the death!" exclaimed Owen.

"Christ's sweat! I understand thee well enough!—I thought thy varlet was a seacoast man of St. Malo, and told a lying legend!" said Sir Taneguy, with something of the feeling which the associations of childhood seldom fail to evoke in the sternest breasts. "I do remember me, my mother was wont to say that those of Wales are cousins of ours, some score times removed; and, though you speak the tongue of Bretagne, it is not altogether after our fashion!—I could be glad to believe thee, for I find thee valiant! But how canst thou pretend thou art come among us to serve against thine own liege lord?"

"Such is not Henry of England—nor ever shall be!" returned Owen, vehemently. "I am of those of my country who are faithful to her as the last leaves are to the oak of winter, and defy and refuse all homage to him!"

"Credit him not, Sir Taneguy!" said the Lord de la Trimouille, recovering from his panic, but still deadly pale. "Who can believe such folly as he alleges concerning his interference on behalf of the false scholar? What knight of our days deems the old oaths and obligations of chivalry more than a ceremonious mutter? King Henry hath enow of Welshmen in his service—and he is known to be the fast friend of the Duke of Burgundy, in secret. If this be a knight, England hath lent him for this treasonable service, since those of the murderer are too well known among us! Put him to the rack, and, my life on it, we shall hear strange secrets babbled—secrets which may concern our very existence—our very lives, messire!"

"Thou hearest, cousin?—I must crack these goodly limbs of thine, as a squirrel cracks a nut, to get at the kernel of thy business in Paris!" said the provost. "But give my Lord de la Trimouille his pretty knife again;—it was never meant to ward a blow from this mace of mine."

"I had papers—the attestations of the English heralds—but they have been stolen from me!" said Owen, now much agitated. "Ye shall not win this sword but with mine arm at its hilt!—Penmynydd, thy son shalt die no felon's death!"

"Search has been made, but no such papers nor robbers found!" returned Taneguy, wrinkling his stern brows. "Yet it would better please me—if these papers of thine contain what we might wring from thee by torture—to spare thee, if thou wilt confess where they are to be found?"

"I cannot—would to all blessed saints I knew! But I have nothing to confess, though ye put me through a wine-press, and squeezed the last drop out of my veins!" said Owen.

"The attestations of English heralds, he says!—and yet you doubt from what quarter he comes!" exclaimed the malicious Sire de la Trimouille. "Sir Provost, you have enemies that say you are but ill fitted for your office, and, by my faith, the constable will begin to think so too, when I return with my report."

"Men's thoughts are free—provided they utter them not—let the constable think what best pleases him; but let me not hear that any man speaks against me, whatever peacock garb he wears!" said Sir Taneguy, significantly; and the menace implied produced an effect. "Let some disarm the prisoner of that steel wand—and, Capeluche, bring some of thy trifles hither—such as the little thumb-screws thou didst invent for pastime."

"Certes, my lord," replied Capeluche. "Loupgarou, my child, go and bring me some of my curiosities out of my chamber called the Devil's Lodgings—those marked with the crosses sautrewise—St. Andrew's crosses, by your pardon, sirs—for I invented them in my Lord of Burgundy's time!"

He said these last words with an emphatic glance at Owen, and added, in a manner which he meant to be, and which was, very significant—"Surrender, sir!—I will not hurt you more than I can help!"

But Owen was not in the least seduced by this promise. "I brought these limbs here to your service, Armagnacs! but ye shall not cripple them thus!" he shouted. "Come and learn how much rather I will die!"

"Yield up this foolish twig!" said the provost, rising fiercely on his tribunal, and raising his mighty weapon; "or I must brain thee, boy, with mine own hand; for I do at times confound mine offices."

"Let the blow fall—I can take death unflinchingly from a knightly hand, but not from this foul hangman's!" returned Owen.

"By the king's life, I know not what to do!—and behold thy varlet has thrust himself in the way to receive death in thy place!" said Taneguy, letting his mace sink gradually down in great perplexity of thought.

"Touching fidelity!—wilt thou do as much for thy dear master, Loupgarou, when my time comes?" said Capeluche,

pretending for the first time to notice that his assistant was not present. "Ah, false disciple, indolent apprentice!—whither is he gone? But what is all here? Ah, sir knight of Burgundy!—*is it rescue?* Here comes the whole gang of the royal milice! I mean the honourable guild of the butchers, marching in procession, with Simon Caboche himself at the head of them!"

It was under the designation of *milice royale* that the Duke of Burgundy organized the populace of Paris, and committed it to the guidance of the chiefs of the corporation of the Boucherie, whose necessary connexion with the multitude, and devotion to his person, pointed them out as the fittest instruments in raising the tumults and insurrections necessary to his designs. Simon Caboche, the hereditary chief of the butchers, executed the office of mob leader with such sanguinary zeal and spirit that the lower classes of the Burgundians of Paris were in general designated from his name—Cabochiens.

Owen started and looked round when Capeluche uttered the emphatic introduction recorded above. He perceived that the doors of the great hall of the Châtelet were thrust violently open, and that a crowd of persons were pushing their way in, before whom the ushers of the court retreated in mingled expostulation and resistance. It consisted of a rabble, very apparently of the lowest populace, in attendance upon a more regular and organized body of men, who marched some three or four abreast, in a species of uniform. A red woollen habit descending to their naked knees, hoods of greasy blue, girdles at which hung the long knives, chains, and steel appropriate to the butcher's craft, monstrous poleaxes used in felling oxen in their hands, composed a formidable array, coupled with the brutal ferocity and strength of their personal appearance. But Owen—who had never before beheld the populace of a great city—gazed with disgust and even alarm at the dreadful multitude which accompanied this more disciplined band. Their wild and haggard visages, their ragged garbs, their yells, and shrieks, and confusion, the stench which exhaled from their filthy carcasses, filled the mountain chief with horror. This feeling was rather heightened than diminished, when he noticed that, although not armed with such dangerous weapons as the butchers, this mob carried instruments used by various crafts of artisans, which, on occasion, might prove of terrible service to any cause they espoused. In especial, Rhys marvelled at the numerous hammers of the ponderous metal used by professors of his own Vulcanic art, which were

borne by men whom he should not otherwise have taken to be smiths. The populace were no longer compelled to appear without the implements of their trade, as was ordained when they were assembled in the parvis of Notre Dame; and, moreover, the events of that day had revived their seditious humour and audacity.

"Death of my life! what is the matter?" said the provost, starting up on his judgment-seat, and now seizing his mace in good earnest.

"Never tell me, my masters!" a voice, almost as deep in its roaring tones as that of a bull, was heard saying, "this is the king's chamber, and it is open to all his liegemen, and especially those who come for redress of grievances! We are here on lawful business—we may beg, if we may not take justice! So let us see your provost!"

"It is Simon Caboche and all his tatterdemalions!" exclaimed Sir Taneguy, with evident alarm. "Knight, my prisoner! if thou hast spoken the truth and art no Burgundian, come within the bars of the tribunal, lest they make thy rescue a pretext of tumult!"

"Go not within the bars, sir knight!—they are all your friends—look at the purple in their caps! they will rescue you!" whispered the executioner, affecting to push the prisoner towards the barred inclosure of the tribunal.

Owen glanced, indeed, at the approaching rabble, and perceived that some of the leaders of the Cabochiens wore sprigs of violet in their hoods and other head-gear; but it only quickened the pace at which he complied with the provost's desire. He even vaulted the massive bar which an affrighted usher was striving to raise to admit him, and found himself among a body of lawyers and halberdiers belonging to the court.

"It is well!—I do begin to believe in thee," said the provost, with much satisfaction. "I will trust in a man's face another time, if it be not an old one! Some of ye go round and close the gates, for I see all thy subjects, Capeluche, are abroad to-day! This comes of giving the Parisians a holiday against their will: they always take another against their masters'! Look not so liver-hued, my Lord de la Trimouille! —he who would rule the kingdom of France must know how to face the republic of Paris!"

"Who hath told you that I desire to meddle with either, Lord Provost?" said La Trimouille, tremulously. "You grudge that any man should be of the smallest consideration with my lord the dauphin, save yourself, or else——"

"I love my lord the dauphin, and I love France; and so your 'or else' is answered!" returned Taneguy Duchâtel. "The saints enlighten me, but I see not that it is to the advantage of either that all the warlike skill I toiled to give him should be devoted to the marshalling of a new dance or to the cut of a gaudy surcoat!"

"Sir, by your fair leave, are you in want of a pleader to your cause, or do these gentry come to urge it with their axes?" said a young man of laws who bustled his way up to Owen's side. The latter immediately recognised in him his interpreter of the spectacle before Notre Dame on the previous day. But the gibing clerk was changed into the solemn procureur expectant, with a face made up to the most demure and lawyer-like standard of gravity. Owen's wondering powers were destined to frequent exercise in his passage to civilization.

"What mean ye?" he said with surprise.

"I have been a year and more licensed to have a tongue on this side of the bar of the Châtelet!" continued the young procureur, eagerly; "and, although no one has as yet had the sagacity to select me in his behalf, credit me, I can plead a cause as well as the most grey-bearded of our seniors who prides himself on never having his spectacles off his nose! Nay, you will have all the advantage which the enthusiasm of a first attempt inspires, and of my talents, for I am a genius of a very different order from those crabbed old men you see about you."

"Shame on you, Maître Gilles de Chastaing! to take the bit from my very mouth!" said an old pleader who arrived hot and breathless through the press at this juncture. "I had my eye upon this *nobilis vir* ever since he made his entry to judgment. I have a wife and five children—I am perfectly skilled in the Pandects, the Code, the customs of Paris, of Burgundy most especially. I know everything!—and this greenbeard to whom you are speaking only knows how to drink and make jests at a tavern."

"I thought your name was Roman de la Rose?" said Owen. "But quarrel not on the score of me: I have all the law I mean to plead, or understand, at my girdle—or had!"

"I am called Roman de la Rose in the kingdom of the Basoche! It is the law and the gospel both!" replied the rapid clerk of the Basoche. "Maître Pierre, I am scandalized to see you cross my game in this manner! Wisdom is not always thatched with grey hairs! Go home to your wife and

children, where you will be a consolation; here you are a nuisance! Ah, it takes the patience of ten martyrs to be a procureur of the Châtelet, else I would appeal to any one in bliss if it would not be much better for me to follow the natural bent of my talents."

"And turn merry-andrew at a fair!" interrupted the indignant Maître Pierre.

"And turn merry-andrew at a fair—at this great fair of Paris!" echoed the young clerk. "Messire, you make the best of all possible pleas—the foundation of all law—force! There is to be a rescue, no doubt, Maître Pierre, and we shall soon see who have brains if it comes to club-work!"

And thus did Owen find himself, by a new freak of the singular chance which persecuted him, likely to prove the pretext of a Burgundian tumult. All the desperation of the circumstances that involved him did not reconcile him to the prospect, and he continued to gaze upon the rolling surges of the approaching mob and the preparations made to withstand them with almost equal misgivings.

Simon Caboche meanwhile led on his phalanx with military precision and regularity; frequently bellowing to the rabble to be quiet, and even striking and cuffing some of the more obstreperous on the ears. The person of this worthy, unlike that of many other great men, was answerable to his renown. He was of such stature, bulk, and gloomy ferocity of visage that he resembled a huge bison walking upright on its hinder limbs, if it were possible to imagine one clad in a rich costume of crimson cloth and robes of some fine fur decorated with numerous insignia of its wearer's dignity as Master-Chief of the Boucherie. He delighted in the terror of his appearance, which he increased by the quantity of his shaggy grey hair and beard; and, demagogue as he was, there was a good deal more of the despot in his gestures and tone of voice, though it must be allowed that this was only when he found himself resisted, or when addressing personages who might otherwise have considered themselves his equals, or superiors, in place and dignity. All his misfortunes—and he had lost three sons and much of his wealth in those deadly broils—had not tamed the rude energy of his character, and he now presented himself at the tribunal of the Provost of Paris with as bold a front as if it was still occupied by a fellow Burgundian.

But almost as soon as Owen had glanced at the formidable carcass of this leader, his attention was caught and riveted by a very different object. Amidst the crimson frieze of the

Cabochiens was conspicuous a female form, clad as it was in a dark mourning robe, and remarkable for the grace and dignity of its stature and movements. Perhaps it might have been considered a thought too tall, but for the musical undulation of the outlines, which kept the eye wandering and satisfied with perpetual variety of charm. The hood of her short mantle was thrown back, and revealed a countenance which enthralled the ardent and poetical imagination of Owen Tudor much more by its expression than even its great and exalted beauty. A kind of subdued fire lurked in its whole character—a singular union of vivacity and languor, passion, and resignation—that gleamed or shadowed away by turns over the features with an inexplicable play of ever-varying fascination. The possessor of this fine face was in the bloom of ripened womanhood—probably about three or four and twenty—and, when the rich colours of her blood suffused her cheeks, seemed naturally of a glowing brunette complexion, more dazzling in its hues than the utmost fairness. But premature thought or sorrow had paled this richness of colouring, or the lustrous blackness of the long tresses that escaped beneath a caul of silver lacework on her face and neck, contrasted it too strongly. Yet altogether she was so noble an impersonation of those lofty dreams of female beauty which haunted the visions of the young Welsh chieftain, that he could not withdraw his eyes from the first look he cast at her.

The interest of so noble a female form was certainly not diminished to Owen Tudor by the circumstance that she carried what it seemed was his cognizance—a bunch of violets—in her bosom. In other respects she was clad with a simplicity that infringed none of the severe sumptuary edicts, rarely observed, by which the use of the more splendid kinds of stuffs was confined to persons of rank. But in vain were the mantle and robe she wore, fashioned of the commonest materials, permitted to the burgher class to which she apparently belonged. No queenly robe ever became its wearer more royally than the garment that flowed round her graceful form, and in which she moved with the elegance and majesty of a Venus amidst the waves. Nor could wealth have purchased an ornament of richer or more elaborate design than the zone on her waist, which was of wrought silk, and probably owed all its beauty to her own needle—representing an endless variety of figures, in all the costumes of the nations then known to Europeans, linked together hand

it, beneath wreaths of stars that
ry.
is this among this hideous throng?"
Owen, abstractedly, and yet aloud.
:—she is none—she is a woman of the bur-
who has exactly complied with the edict of Bourges—
called of 'Proud Madame!'—for our lady, Queen
was so scandalized to see petty merchants' and traders'
with nobility in garb, that——" began the formal
Maître Pierre, when his livelier competitor cut him short.

"Ah, my dear client, you are quite right!—That lady
wonder is—one of Heaven's making!—Heard ye never of the
glorious minstreless—if she were not a Burgundian!—the
nightingale of love!—the modern Héloise!—the Sappho of
our times!—the beautiful, the inspired!—but least said is
soonest mended.—Her name is Huéline!—Mademoiselle
Huéline de Troye!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE JUDGMENT OF TANEGUY DUCHATEL.

"HUELINE de Troye!—In truth, Sir James of Scotland spoke of her!—Have I seen her ere now—for some memory comes back upon me like the echo of a departed strain of sweetest music!" said the dreamy Celt; "but 'tis impossible!—And is this gorgeous creature the wife of yonder savage churl—of a butcher?"

"Not yet, but she ought to be—she has long been betrothed to that Renaud Caboche who struts beside her—you are not mistaken, mine honoured client!" said the acquiescive Roman, edging himself still nearer to the knight. "Maître Pierre, you may go—I think we have no need of a consultation at present.—It is astonishing, messire, how soon we forget things in Paris!—It is not three months, well counted, since Mademoiselle Huéline appeared on a plea before this tribunal—and you see how my Lord Provost stares at her, as if he had never seen a handsome woman ere now in his life!"

"Before this tribunal!—What crime had she committed?" said Owen, with a very disagreeable start.

"Crime!—yet truly, it is a crime to be the daughter of a man so unfortunate as Jean de Troye—an atheist, a wizard, a poisoner—I know not what we did not call him after his fall!"

'ied the pleader. "She came to implore that he might be

released, or at least suffered to leave the solitary and loathsome dungeon of the Châtelet, in which he is confined. They do not kill him, because it is said he made the king mad by certain potent drugs—and can *unmad* him, if he pleases!—God only knows!—None of our officers dared undertake the plea—and so she pleaded it herself—and so wisely and eloquently, that the tears came to the eyes of the stocks and stones of the Châtelet—I mean of the procureurs and clerks!—There was not a single word of law in all she said, but none of us could have done it half so well!"

"It was not in nature to withstand her, methinks?" ejaculated Owen.

"But it was in yonder piece of jointed ironwork," said Roman, in a discreetly low tone. "Sir Taneguy would rather let the devil loose in Paris than Jean de Troye, for he did marvellous mischiefs in his time! He was the mind of all the huge carcass of Parisian tumult! It is all body now, and none the more manageable for that! For my part, I would let him out, were it only that I might calculate against reason and not against madness, which sets all rules of polity at defiance!"

At this moment the voice of the Lord Provost was heard above the noise and confusion which accompanied the entrance of the Cabochiens.

"Life of the king! what is all this?—Pest and death! what uproar have we here?" he shouted, as the crowd rolled up to his tribunal. "Mine old tormentors again!—What the fiend do ye here, Simon, with your red bands?—Know ye not that you are forbidden under penalties, worth noting, to appear in any number?"

"We are one under it, Lord Provost, whatever it be!—the main part follow me of their own freewill and liking, which is their business, and not mine!" replied the Master-Chief of the Boucherie. "But, if we may not ask for justice, I know not what will be denied us next— unless it be the very air we breathe!"

"What justice would ye have?—the gallows?" said the provost. "That would I deny to no Burgundian, and least of all to the Chief of the Grande Boucherie!—Well, whose throat have ye cut and come to complain about?—You gave rare justice, Simon, when you and your calf-killers were lords in Paris!"

"Yea, but not enough of it—since you live to complain of it, Lord Provost!" replied Caboche; and the ferocious wit

involved in the repartee elicited a loud shout of laughter among his followers, in which he himself seemed too fierce to join.

"Do you threaten, Master Simon?" said the provost, with an emphatic nod at his armed retinue.

"No, messire!—a blow and a word, not a word and a blow, has ever been the motto of the Caboches—for we have mottoes, too, though we paint them not so gaudily on our banners as you knights and lords!" said Simon. "But speak thou, Huéline, for I have no patience with these questionings—and thou waggest the best tongue among us!"

"Dost thou mean the noisiest clapper?—But let her speak—a woman's prating is the less wearisome, that we expect it," said Sir Taneguy. "Speak, maiden, if thou still art such—which is greatly to the shame of the Boucherie, an it be!"

"She will not marry Renaud till her father is released—so look if the wedding be like to please you, messire!" returned Simon Caboche, with a glare of defiance and anger.

"And hast thou no skill to teach her any other lesson, boy!—truly, thou art one!" continued the provost, glancing at Renaud Caboche, who, bedizened like a young peacock, flaunted it audaciously beside his betrothed.

"Had I an Armagnac throat in my grasp, you would not call me boy!" returned the young butcher, for he was touched in his most sensitive point.

"Dost thou not call him 'boy,' damsel, that gives thee nothing else to think about than musty old traitors rotting in dungeons?" said Taneguy, with a mixture of gallantry and irritation in his tones. "By holy Denis! I would I had thee out of the shambles on one of these moony May nights—and, if thou wert ever of the mind to return, it should not be for lack of good meat and lodging!—Tell me, sweetheart, were it not better to be a noble knight's leman than a greasy butcher's spouse?"

"I would at least thou wouldst try the experiment, fair damosel!" said the Lord de la Trimouille, who had been gazing with great and licentious admiration at the suppliant. "I speak not for Sir Taneguy—though I am his friend—but, by the rood! thou hast only to choose to take, were it among kings!"

"The Caboches yield not to the noblest in any true quality of descent!" fiercely interposed the aristocratic demagogue. "We have been the sons of our fathers for the last three hundred years, which is much more than many knights and nobles can truly aver!"

"Tut, tut, ye believe, and so do wiser men—but the cuckoos find nests in the Boucherie as well as elsewhere!" replied the provost, laughing hoarsely. "Do not listen to this false courtier, damsel!—his speech goes more trippingly off the tongue than mine, but it is not so true!—Think of this at thy leisure,—and now let us hear of what weighty matter thou art spokeswoman?"

"Messire!—you have, as we know too well, a prisoner in your hands—a noble chevalier, whose only offence is even the excess of his valour and generosity!" said Huéline de Troye, after a slight pause—her complexion flushing more deeply than during the whole of this rough interlude, which made it glow like the scarlet hues of red-hot metal. Then kneeling, she added, in a faint but impassioned and most winning voice, "Noble Lord Provost! if, of your own justice, you have not yet enlarged him, we come to implore you, by your knightly honour, by the rights of the free city of Paris, by the king's royal majesty, aggrieved in a wrong done to his poorest subject,—to set him free at once as the winds of heaven, which have never yet obeyed the mastery of man!"

"He is, in good faith, then, a Burgundian?" said Taneguy, with a reproachful look at Owen Tudor. "Alack, I find I am but a green boy still, to believe in faces and in words!"

"By all the oaths that ever were sworn! I am none!" exclaimed the Chevalier Sauvage, but with an involuntary regret and hesitation in his utterance. He saw that, almost the instant she entered, the eye of Huéline de Troye signalized him out, and there was something so subduingly eloquent and penetrating in its expression, that it seemed to exercise the power of a spell over him.

"We come to witness even as the noble knight declares—to make his purgation with our oaths!" said Huéline, earnestly. "He is no Burgundian, unless to be too rashly generous, on the weak side of law and right, makes men Burgundian in these days! A compliment you will not pay to us, my Lord Sir Taneguy, of all men! But here they stand—the leaders and masters of the commonalty, as the Caboches are called—ready to take any form of adjuration that we know nought of this knight; that no conspiracy existed, no outbreak was planned, as your proclamation avers; and, consequently, that this knight is clear of all blame and offence, and unjustly placed in durance!"

"If words were proofs, thou hast enow, we know, damosel, to melt away the solid earth, and turn all beliefs topsy-

turvy!" replied the provost. "But we shall need more than words to believe in so strange a prodigy."

"We are here ready to take the oath of the cross, or abide the ordeal of fire even, that she speaks the truth, and methinks we should know if aught Burgundian was a-foot in Paris!" said the Master-Chief of the Boucherie, with a grim smile. "Here are Philippe Thibert, the three Le Goix, Gualtier Sainctyon, and all the rest of us who are proud to call the king's cousin Captain; and we witness that we know nothing of this knight, whence he comes, nor whither he goes, his father, nor his grandfather! Therefore, if ye keep him your guest, we owe you no thanks, for he is none of ours!"

"I would fain believe this, Simon; nay, I have some better reason to do so than your loud talking," said the provost, thoughtfully. "What say you, Sire de la Trimouille?"

"I say that the constable's commands are express; he is to be tortured, to wring the truth from his vitals!" replied that vigorous statesman.

"Tortured!—everlasting shame be on thee for that word, gaudy man, whoe'er thou art!" exclaimed Huéline de Troye. "But know ye not, learned interpreters of the laws!—will ye not witness for me, that no man can be put to the torture to win confession of any crime who hath not a direct and open accuser?—And who accuses this noble knight?"

"Here come accusers in a cloud, or I err marvellously!" said La Trimouille, triumphantly pointing to some personages habited like the beadles of a cathedral, in dark robes, with wands in their hands, who had been silently making their way to the bar of the tribunal. Finding themselves noticed, two or three began brawling aloud together, that the University of Paris had arrived in the square of the Châtelet, and demanded an audience of the Lord Provost of Paris!

"Saints! have we not mischief enough a-brewing, but we must have these meddlers too?" said Sir Taneguy. "What want they? But their accursed charters give them the privilege of stunning the ears of those who sit in my place at pleasure!—Tell my lady, the University, that I await her honoured presence, entreating her to put herself to no inconvenient haste, for well we know she is aged, and full of infirmities and malady!"

The beadles of the University withdrew, and the provost turned, with a look of more kindness than he had hitherto shown, to Owen. "Lo ye now, knight, I will wager my noble roan charger against your squire's dead gelding that these

doctors are coming to prate about the broken head of their scholar and their privileges! They sent me word as much by one of their magpies last night, which did the rather dispose me to believe thy story; for if thou wert a Burgundian they would know it! The Grande Boucherie itself is not so rank a dunghill of treason, and well should I like to be among their learned pates with my mace!"

"Messire, it is not for me to enlighten your experience; but all, not wilfully blind, can see that this is only a trick to support the saying of the Cabochiens, to set another traitor loose in Paris, with his plots ripening in concealment!" said the suspicious Lord de Trimouille. "But at least the Cabochiens cannot deny that they are acquainted with the person and hiding-place of the seditious scholar who preached the overthrow of all things human and divine, yesterday, in the parvis of Notre Dame!"

"Do they think to do thee service by disavowing thee? or are they glad of a pretext to harass us, at any cost?" said the provost, infinitely perplexed.

Owen's early impressions of the dignity and power of the University made the tidings of their hostile purposes against himself sufficiently formidable. And he found that he was destined to the aggravation of having their enmity construed into friendly zeal! In his indignation he gave no reply to the provost's question, whose gloom returned and deepened.

During the pause that followed, the procession of the University entered, preceded by its beadles, and headed by the rectors and chief dignitaries of the numerous colleges. After these personages came a much more formidable body, in an age when physical force was undoubtedly in the ascendant. The scholars of the University—including young men from almost every country of Christendom, armed ostensibly with staves, their only unprohibited weapon, but very probably with more dangerous ones under their long habits—followed those reverend leaders in a compact mass. Amidst them came the occasion, or perhaps the pretended occasion, of the visit—Perrinet le Clerc! The look of hatred and fury which glared at Owen from a swath of ensanguined clouts and bandages, distinguished his enemy to him, but only stirred his contempt. He folded his arms, and surveyed the whole group with a smile of defiance.

Taneguy Duchâtel received his visitors with inward dislike and contempt, but with great exterior respect. He arose from his tribunal, and would not resume his seat till he had

compelled the magnates of the University to accept the benches which were brought for them. Meanwhile he observed, with a smile of grim humour, the effect which the presence of the Cabochiens produced on the doctors and students. The latter, who were at war with all government and all Parisians indiscriminately, seemed little pleased with the recognition. Their seniors, knowing that there were no better Burgundians to be found anywhere than in the Grande Boucherie, were greatly strengthened and comforted.

The rector of the University, a pompous, full-blown dignitary, evidently gathered additional pride, and haughtily declined the offered accommodation. "We come for justice, Lord Provost! until we obtain which, the king's most faithful daughter, the University of Paris, shall never rest in my person!" said the august functionary. "*Fiat justitia ruat cœlum!*—justice is the life, the breath, the nostrils of the king! We come for justice, Sire Duchâtel, and in assertion of our privileges!"

"It is not always that these objects can be reconciled; but why come ye as thick as hornets to a hive? What armed resistance did your reverend lordship expect to meet by the way?" returned the provost.

"The whole body is hurt when the finger is injured; yea, when the minutest hair is plucked!" replied the dignitary. "Would you, Sir Taneguy, that the teachers, friends, masters, and companions of this ill-treated young man, Perrinet le Clerc, should have no more feeling of his wrongs than if they were inflicted on a member of some other carcass?"

"This doctrine would put all knighthood on the side of this young chevalier," said the provost. "But my sword and wand of justice are of equal length: what justice do you demand?"

"Vengeance, Sire Duchâtel!—vengeance on the false Burgundian knight who struck my skull bare for obeying the commands of my honoured mother, the University of Paris!" shouted Perrinet, the froth flying from his lips with fury.

"You are noted for filial reverence; we have had you before us ere now," said Sir Taneguy, bitterly. "What mean you, dan scholar? If your skull be cracked, it will let in the more light!"

"My lord, this jesting ill becomes your office," said the rector, bristling up. "The privileges of the University of Paris are not matters of idle mirth to the King of France himself, whose chair you but occupy for a season! Here are

the volumes of our rights, granted by that ever-memorable prince and lord (whose soul God keep in bliss, Amen!)—Philip, surnamed most justly, if for no other reason, Augustus;—extended, confirmed, and assured by that mirror of all virtuous dominations, King Philip the Long!—altered, improved, and greatly enlarged by ——"

"Enough, reverend messire! I am but too well aware that the scholars of Paris are permitted by law to exercise all rebellion and enormities unpunished!" interrupted Sir Taneguy.

"I say not that, Lord Provost; but the punishment of these offences belongs only to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction," replied the rector, vehemently. "The dignity of this great University, which from Athens came to Rome, and from Rome to Paris, bringing with it all human science and learning, as a sponge absorbs the humidity of the spots on which it is placed, demands no less! Lo, then! I put my requisition in form, Lord Provost; and the annals of your jurisdiction will inform you at what peril your predecessors have dared to deny us justice! *In nomine Domini, Amen!* I demand that the violator of our privileges be immediately surrendered to our officers, that he be kept in safe confinement until he has suffered the fine and corporal amends which a solemn convocation may deem adequate to the offence!"

"Be not cajoled, my Lord Provost; the prisoner will not be long in any custody but your own—the University will find some loophole for a Burgundian emissary to escape at!" said the Lord de la Trimouille.

"I will remain your prisoner, Sir Taneguy!—You shall not surrender me alive to the scorns and maltreatment of schoolmen and traitorous greybeards!" said Owen Tudor, with the vehemence of sincerity.

"Fair knight, I fear me, it is the best kindness I can now show thee, even so to yield thee," replied the provost. "At least they will not put thee to the rack; and if thou remainest with me, my lord the constable is bent, thou seest, either to learn thy secrets, or to make thee invent some to trouble him withal!—Answer me in all sincerity, for thy life perchance hangs on the word! wouldst thou not have it so?"

Taneguy himself hardly knew whether he was offering an evasion or a snare: it would have depended on the turn which his passions took at the prisoner's reply. But the Cabochiens seemed to have some private reasons for misdoubting any friendly purpose in the efforts of the University

to obtain possession of the person of the culprit. At all events, their bright spokeswoman made an emphatic signal to Owen to be silent; and, stepping forward with perfect modesty, but with a tranquil firmness that showed she was not altogether unaccustomed to a public audience,—"My Lord Rector!" she said, "full well you know, and can bear witness, that this knight is no Burgundian, and that you do really and truly desire to have him in your power to maltreat him! Wherefore, I tell you, it shall not be;—nor have ye any the least right to demand him as a sacrifice to the pride and insolence of your privileges! Ye have the sole violator of them already in your custody, and may punish him at your will!—It was Master Perrinet le Clerc only who violated them, by drawing his dagger, and assailing the life of the poor scholar that pleaded for the commonalty! This knight, who defended him at his proper hazard, deserves only your thanks and gratitude!"

"By holy Jude, 'tis so!—who will deny it?" shouted Simon Caboche.

An officer commanding his men to fire on an enemy, and suddenly finding their muskets turned to his own breast, could scarcely look more astonished than the rector of the University at this manifestation.

"What, Huéline de Troye!—what, Simon Caboche!—what, take part against the University!—He is no Burgundian!—'tis true!—What mean ye?" exclaimed the bewildered rector.

"He is a Burgundian!—Sir Provost, do not believe them!—They are all Burgundians together—they would deceive you!" shouted the furious scholar of the Sorbonne.

"Thou liest, clerk! falsely thou liest—I am none!" returned Owen, yielding to the indignation which had long been fermenting in his heart. "Let him who maintains the contrary stand forth! Here is my glove!"

"'Tis full knightly spoken!—What say ye? shall we grant a field?" said Sir Taneguy, laughing till his breastplate shook again. "Men must answer with such weapons as they wield. The scholar uses his tongue, the knight his lance."

"Hear ye, sirs! scholars of Paris!—this is the answer that knights and nobles give to honest men's prayers for justice!" cried Perrinet. "Clad in complete steel, wielding their heavy lances, they challenge us to battle them in our flimsy robes, skilless in arms!"

A furious uproar among the scholars responded to this appeal, mingled with excellent imitations of the shrieks and

yells of various birds and wild beasts, and a sudden wood of staves appeared in the air. But the provost seemed rather to rejoice than be dismayed at the prospect of an onset. "Hark ye, devils of scholars!" he exclaimed, "Master Rector, and doctors all! I hold that your jongleuresse has sufficiently answered all that you can urge, unless ye defend assassination in every case! This knight has maintained and not violated your privileges; and I will not surrender him to your petty cruelties, which yet slay, as the Bohemians pierce cattle, with so fine a steel that neither gore nor wound mark why the beast dies!"

"Look to it, Lord Provost! if you deny me justice, I will take it?" yelled Perrinet, delirious with rage.

"Master Perrinet, you are hurt in the head, and are raving," said Sir Taneguy, calmly. "And, but that your father is a good Armagnac, I could be tempted to help cure your fever, by letting you a little more blood."

"Take comfort, sir clerk! he is spared to no good," said the Lord de la Trimouille, whom restless suspicions and cowardice deprived of all humanity. "We must learn what is conspiring in Paris against our lives, at whatever cost! And therefore, my Lord Provost, the king's council despatches to you this missive, which disregard on peril of your head!"

"It is even so!" said the provost, in a regretful tone, as he opened and perused the parchment handed to him by the noble bearer. "Either, sirs, ye must surrender the seditious mendicant scholar to me, or—or—I must put this handsome lad to the cruellest tortures to wring the truth from him!—Life of the king! thou art neither woman nor minstreless, fair Huéline, if thou wouldst not rather betray a dozen such saplings to the axe, than suffer those comely limbs to be wrenched out of all shape and fitness!"

The minstreless of the Boucherie flushed deeply, and then an extreme pallor visited her cheeks. But suddenly a thought seemed to strike her, like a gleam of light; and, raising her brilliant eyes, she exclaimed, "Since it must be so, why, so let it be! Of what moment is the life of a poor talker of words, compared with that of this noble doer of deeds?—The mendicant scholar shall be surrendered—I trust, to your mercy—on sworn condition that you suffer this knight to depart with me—with us of the Boucheric—free, unquestioned, and unscathed!"

"I swear it by whatever oath thou wilt, maiden! and am right glad to be rid of him so peacefully, for I pity and

honour him!" said Sir Taneguy, eagerly. "Speak! who was the sedition-monger; and depart with the knight whither thou wilt, as well matched a pair as the fiery sword drove out of Eden!"

The consternation among the grandees of the University was very visible, and even the Cabochiens stared and murmured. But these emotions were lost in that caused by a burst of fiery sentiment from the young Welsh chief.

"Damsel of the Boucherie! show not thyself so baseborn in very deed!" he exclaimed. "I will not live at the price of such treachery! The poor scholar served ye bravely and nobly, and, if thou betrayest him, a curse will light on such ingratitude, and henceforth thy fair face shall seem, in all men's eyes, a flowery bed for snakes to nestle in!"

"I may no longer pause!" exclaimed Huéline, with enthusiasm. "Your oath is on record, noble Lord Provost! and thus I claim its condition—thus I surrender the poor scholar—thus I am treacherous!—Behold him at your feet, at your mercy—for I am he—my father's ancient mantle the sole difference!"

The astonishment with which this revelation was received was universal, and for some moments mingled with incredulity. The Cabochiens themselves shared it, and were evidently altogether unconscious that the Boucherie had furnished the daring champion of their party—marvellously daring, being a woman! But the general recollection of the resemblance between the features of the poor scholar and those of Huéline de Troye—of her learning, eloquence, and impassioned devotion to the Burgundian cause—her experience in the exercise of a still more difficult and beautiful art, for the minstrels of the middle ages did not confine themselves to the labours of composition, but often sung their own verses in public meetings of the craft—the total disappearance of the poor scholar—the danger, united to all the magnificent generosity of the avowal—forced conviction on the most reluctant minds.

"Go, go, I will not believe thee—and yet 'tis like enough!" said Taneguy Duchâtel, after a breathless pause. "Go—he is better able to endure the torture than thou."

"Let him go with me free and unharmed, or your pledged knighthood is forfeit!" exclaimed the minstreless.

"It is impossible, I tell thee, girl!—my lord the constable will have one victim or another! Shall I believe thee, and put thee to the torture to discover what complot ye had formed

which our sudden measures discomfited?" returned the provost, at a high pitch of his loud voice.

"Nay, if you bellow it, provost, we have lungs too!" said Caboche, in a voice so like an articulate roaring of thunder that the assertion was amply supported. "But as to putting Huéline to the torture—albeit she hazarded herself against all our knowledge and consents—look first to win the Boucherie, stone by stone!"

"Nay, sir, you have sworn by your knightly word that, if I revealed the Burgundian prater to you, this knight, and we of the Boucherie, should depart in peace!" said Huéline, fervidly. "And, ah, good knight! ah, noble Sir Taneguy! chivalry still pretends to be herself, in words, and what will knights say if they hear how falsely thou didst deny a damsel her sworn boon?"

So sacred was such a promise held, at least in theory, that the fierce provost himself was confused with the address. It is also more than probable that he was secretly well inclined towards Owen Tudor, and that the heroic daring of the minstreless touched answering chords in his own stern but lofty heart. Luckily at this moment the enraged scholar of the Sorbonne thrust in his word.

"You have promised to relèase the Burgundian, in exchange for the traitorous scholar, if this madwoman—the daughter of mad Jean de Troye—be he!" yelled Perrinet le Clerc. "But not on the charges brought against him by the University for my shameful maltreatment and persecution! Surrender him to my honoured mother, and we will see if we cannot chastise treason as well as any royal officer in the land!"

The hatred which Taneguy entertained against the University in general was immediately concentrated against this individual of that distinguished body.

"Already I have told ye, that I deem ye had only scant justice, inasmuch as the stroke was not hard enough!" he replied. "I see well that this sly wench has caught me in a trap; but our Lady forbid that Taneguy and his word should travel different roads. I give the knight to the party who can, or who will keep him, and, I trow me, the constable will not weep over the slain if ye do battle for him, Cabochiens and scholars!"

"Come with us, then, very noble knight, glory of dying chivalry!" exclaimed the youthful poetess, extending her hand to Owen. And although he was enwrathed to find the confirmation which circumstances seemed to offer against him,

and uttered some murmurs of refusal and remonstrance, his eye encountered the glance of streamy fire which the minstreless cast upon him—and he was silent.

"Ay, go with her, boy, to the Boucherie—the quarters are good, though rough!" said Taneguy, good-humouredly. "Go with her—and I would I were in thy shoes! And if when I send for thee I find thou art still in the Boucherie, and hold'st to thine Armagnac tale, I will myself present thee at the dauphin's court for one of the best and most promising (albeit, something too rash) of all our youthful chivalry!"

Owen blushed deeply; but, affecting not to understand the innuendo, he replied, "Whoever seeks me there, my Lord Provost, or wherever I may be in Paris, friend or foe, shall not miss his aim!—I will find my papers out, though they be hidden in the fiery gulf!—and yonder surely is one of the rogues who robbed my varlet of them!"

At this instant Owen's glance lighted by merest chance on the one-eyed beggar of the parvis of Notre Dame, who had thrust himself forward from among the crowd in his anxiety at the turn which events had taken.

The provost's attention was instantly attracted by the observation, and he listened very attentively while Owen stated his reasons for believing the mendicant connected with the plunder of his baggage. Yet the accused party seemed to take no notice of what was said, though all the audience perceived who was meant, until the provost raised his voice to its highest pitch, and commanded him to come forward. "Good, my lord, I am deaf as well as purblind!—what is the matter?" said the beggar, advancing with a step that seemed to tremble with years rather than agitation.

The matter was soon explained to him; but, far from confessing the offence with which he was charged, the mendicant burst into such vehement ejaculations and protestations of innocence, that Owen was greatly shaken in his opinion, and declared that he had only suspicions to allege.

"What rogue is this? Dost thou know him, Capeluche?" said the provost, at last, out of patience.

"Yes, my lord, he is a poor brother in our Lady's love who lives on the steps of St. Jacques de la Boucherie—and does no harm to any one, much less his neighbour!" replied the authority appealed to. "I have seen him there for years, and always give him a sol for charity when I have a good hang!"

"Let a reward be offered for these papers—and, as I have

said, let who will, or can, carry off the prize!" said Sir Taneguy. "I will sit here to see fair play between the University and the Cabochiens! But let this hall of the Châtelet be clear and silent as a grave within ten ticks of the clock—or I will make it one in reality!"

"Godfather! the knight is your guest—bear him safely with us!" said Huéline de Troye.

"But if he is not a Burgundian?" said Renaud Caboche.

"Still, he saved the life of Huéline—of thy betrothed, Renaud!" said the victorious minstreless, and Simon Caboche immediately took the word and marshalled his men as if to force a passage through all opposition. The magnates of the University were evidently puzzled, having in reality no great zeal in the cause of the Armagnac scholar, save in so far as it furnished them with a means of annoyance to the government. While they consulted, the Cabochiens acted. Huéline, in an accent of irresistible sweetness and tenderness, implored the Welsh knight to honour the Boucherie with his presence for a few days, until he could safely venture forth—until the "cruel and choleric" constable might be pleased to hear his explanations.

"Come with us, youth," said Simon Caboche, who had been musing awhile, but who started into activity the moment he heard aught that savoured of resistance and defiance. "I will wager a drove of the fattest beeves of Poitou the constable shall not take you easily from the Boucherie against your will—and, with it, you may stay as long there as it pleases you, an honoured guest!"

"It is the only way to prove that thou art what thou callest thyself,—a Burgundian would not abide our summons in Paris long," said Taneguy, cheerfully. "I will remember my promise; so go with them, and let me see how ye will ravage it, like monks of St. Germain, among these fellows that call themselves scholars, though little known to Paris by that name!"

With this permission, Owen yielded with his natural impetuosity to the various passions which inspired him. "Have with you, then, Master Butcher!" he exclaimed. "My sword is a borrowed one, but its owner will not ask it of me while I need it so much! Let us make a way for Mademoiselle Huéline to pass on quietly."

Simon Caboche instantly set his butchers in motion; and Renaud, uttering an eager cry, dashed forward with his dagger bared, to side with the Chevalier Sauvage. But the

[illegible] of the University awaited not the charge. Pro[illegible] a [illegible] protest against all the proceedings, and [illegible] their followers to make no resistance, they moved off with as much dignity and slowness as were [illegible] with a good deal of alarm. The scholars, finding themselves [illegible] by their leaders and beholding the advance of [illegible] so formidable, scarcely hesitated a moment, and then [illegible] pell-mell in their train. In vain did Perrinet le Clerc gesticulate, shout, yell, call them cowards and Burgundians, while the froth flew from his lips, until, yielding to the excess of his fury, he threatened the provost and his whole party with his vengeance! Yzeguy only [illegible] by peals of scornful laughter, and finally Perrinet himself took to indignant flight before the threatening advance of the Chevalier Sauvage.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GRANDE BOUCHERIE.

The district of ancient Paris designated by this term commenced among the tortuous windings of the streets and alleys running into the square of the Châtelet. These were chiefly inhabited by butchers, and other of the disgusting and horrible trades which depended on their knives for occupation—such as tallow-melters, tripe-sellers, sausage-makers, dealers in skins and offal, tanners, and dyers.

The Boucherie proper was a large irregular space, surrounded by open slaughter-houses of massive timber, furnished with stalls, blocks, hooks, chains, and all the other appurtenances of the trade. These intersected each other in a labyrinthine maze, which persons not accustomed to their windings could with difficulty trace. The houses of the master-butchers formed the limit of this area in every direction, each inclosed in its network of stalls and shambles; large strong buildings, ornamented with galleries and gables of curiously carved woodwork, which, being all connected by huge walls and draining ditches, composed a fortress that, considering its location in the very heart of Paris, and the characteristics of its population, was of no slight consequence. The great street of St. Jacques, which at this period divided Paris into almost equal halves, traversed one of the exteriors of the Boucherie, and made it the key of a formidable and commanding position.

The interior arrangements of this little commonwealth contributed to render it dangerous, as its power was in the hands of few. The corporation of the butchers was the richest in Paris, and was governed almost entirely by its own laws and regulations. It consisted of some score families enjoying the monopoly of the supply of meat in Paris. In one sense it was strictly an aristocratic community. The right or wrong of primogeniture was acknowledged, and the eldest sons succeeded their sires in as strict entail as the crown itself. The Salic law was also in full vigour, in regulating successions. Females and bastards were rigorously excluded from all participation in the Boucherie; and, as only the head of each family was permitted to exercise the trade, it had gradually become limited to about twenty persons, styled the master-butchers of the Grande Boucherie. Simon Caboche was the hereditary head of this body, and received from that circumstance his title of Master-Chief.

Rich as they were, the master-butchers of Paris had not yet dreamed of the refinement of modern mercantile wealth, which takes its residence as far as possible from the place of its creation. They were even obliged, by express ordonnances, and still more by custom, to take a personal share in the gory business of the shambles. But now their occupation was gone, and the palmy days of the Boucherie seemed departed for ever! The zeal of the butchers in favour of the Duke of Burgundy won them the hatred of the Armagnacs, by whom they were deprived of their privileges, their market divided and transferred, and themselves, as far as might be, deprived of their influence over the populace.

It was towards this quarter that the romantic Welsh knight-errant directed his unwilling and yet fascinated steps, and his whole progress was a species of popular ovation. The mob were encouraged by the presence of their old leader and his armed Cabochiens, and followed in increasing numbers, and with an enthusiastic uproar of shouts and applause, across the square of the Châtelet.

The news of the discovery of the poor scholar's identity with the popular minstreless of the Boucherie spread like wildfire, and stirred the inflammable Parisians to a frenzy of delight and triumph! The name of Huéline pealed in the exulting thunder of the people to the skies, in continual union with the designation by which only the Welsh knight was known. "Vive Huéline! Vive le Chevalier Sauvage!" resounded in mingled accents on every side. And although

eyes of the minstreless continually filled with tears, and she strove to calm the popular effervescence with gentle entreaties, the glory of triumphant genius shone on her brow, and her beauty glowed into its utmost splendour, irradiated by the master passions of her nature—love and ambition!

Neither Huéline nor the Chevalier Sauvage was well aware how it happened, but the arm of the minstreless was linked in that of the knight; and ever and anon, carried away by the fervour of his gratitude and admiration—bewildered and intoxicated by the joyful uproar around him—Owen raised her hand to his lips, and covered it with kisses. The Parisians, wont to be delighted with show and spectacle, enjoyed this display of beauty, genius, and passion, as much as the most magnificent exhibitions of material pomp and triumph. The son of Goronwy shared the popular favour; and so indeed did his lord's steed, which the provost ordered to be restored to him. The women hugged and kissed both the biped and the quadruped, until the latter began to show signs of weariness, perhaps at some sly instigation of the good squire himself, and reared and plunged so as greatly to incommode and scatter their mutual admirers.

Owen seemed to himself to be moving in some ideal world of glory and delight, achieved without toil or effort,—to walk the air, wandering amid golden clouds, as he had often dreamed in his childhood, asleep on some lofty crag, in the sunset! Strange as it may read in the cold repetition, the bright woman by his side appeared to him, when he strove to shape his thoughts, like a star glittering and glowing forth from some dark bosom of night, and throwing a glory and a beauty over all beneath its radiance! The aspect of the terrific mob of Paris had lost its horror and terror, or retained only so much of either as heightened the emotions inspired by its gentleness and caresses, like those of a gambolling tiger. And the spell lasted over both—over all—until the procession entered the filthy windings of the Val de Misère. But it was not in any magic of thought or feeling to resist the disgusting and horrible impressions of this true abode of squalid suffering and poverty. The foul odours that exhaled on every side, the haggard ruins inhabited by a hideous and swarming populace, which came forth as if for the express purpose of being inspected in all their misery; the narrow, unpaved lanes, the traces of disgusting trades that offered themselves in the gutters, in the stenches, in the pallid visages and stained
'ts of the denizens, excited the loathing and amazement
'oung mountain chief.

Until now, Huéline shared the general joy and enthusiasm with the fervour of poetical genius that concentrates into burning focuses the common light around. But she started, as if from a dream, when Owen murmured in her ears, "And doth so bright a flower bloom on this reeking foulness?"

"Alack, gentle knight! do not wake me yet! Let me dream on awhile!" she replied. "This is the Val de Misère, and truly I may not deny I am its born child and inheritor! Long years my father dwelt amidst these hideous fens of humanity; here he won the hearts of a fickle populace by his tenderness and skill in remedying their sufferings!—here he learned what cancers eat into the souls of men—what cruel laws make them the dismal things we see! How they recompensed him, reads ill in the history of our times, or shall, when right-judging eyes search into their record! Until then, even his daughter must be silent."

There was something of proud regret and disdain in this sacrifice to the prejudices which she must suppose to animate a knight and noble, that touched Owen to the heart. He endeavoured to look with less scorn and disgust at the fearful spectacles that presented themselves, but his fine nostrils lost not their dilation and quivering expression, even when they entered the comparatively open area of the Boucherie.

It was only in secret yards and vaults that the butchers ventured to elude the prohibitions of their Armagnac masters, and carry on their trade. Accordingly, a dreary waste of empty stalls, unbleeding gutters, hooks without carcasses, saluted Owen's gaze. But these were sufficiently disgusting in eyes accustomed to the freshness of nature, and belonging to a romantic youth whose imagination was full of the pomps of courts and chivalry.

But Owen was allowed little time for reflection. The moment they were fairly in the shambles, and the massive wooden gates which admitted them barred, like the sluices of a harbour, on the multitude that flowed after them—Simon Caboche turned and welcomed Owen to the Boucherie with a hearty hug. "Well we wot, you are no Burgundian, but a knight-adventurer come to France in search of good employment,—yet thou shalt be one ere we let thee go!" he said, gleefully. "Aha, you are well out of the provost's claws, for he lets as few escape him as any mouser I know of! Brother masters, let us make him very welcome, for, by the good duke's beard, we shall have need of all such merry prickers when we tussel it again with the Armagnacs for Paris!"

"Dear godfather! you did promise me to yield an unco-

tional—a more generous hospitality!" said Huéline, warmly. "If the life of the poor scholar be in aught dear to any of us, hath not this noble knight out-deserved all recompense? He is our guest—our honoured, our glorious guest!—but whatever else he may become is for his own sole judgment and will."

"Let him not forget that the Armagnacs would have consigned him to the doom of a malefactor and of a slave—and that the Burgundians saved him from it—and I am content!" said the Master-Chief, over whom the words of Huéline seemed to possess a magic influence. "You will be one of us anon, young knight, if our betrothed here undertakes it, for she hath witchcraft in her, and as our merry duke once quoth to me (and he hath more wit and good jests in him than any mumming fool of them all), 'Aha, Simon! you may lead a herd of wild horses better with a mare than a rope!' And so, in very truth ——"

"Dear father, peace! You bid not your guest welcome, and this is your own threshold!" interrupted Huéline, colouring even in the eyes at this specimen of Duke John's facetiæ, which Simon Caboche was in the continual habit of repeating, both as a demonstration of his former intimacy with the royal jester, and from the satisfaction he took in the peculiar turn of his rough and licentious wit.

"Right welcome are you then, knight, and may luck be in your crossing my door-stone!" replied Simon. A shadow passed over Huéline's visage as he uttered the words—a shadow of the future—inexplicably mournful and yet tinged with light, like the first clouds of a coming darkness.

Owen Tudor had arrived before a building which, to those acquainted with the topography of the Grande Boucherie, was known as the residence of the Master-Chief. It was a large rambling mansion, on arches, that formed a range of slaughter-houses below, descended to at certain points by drawbridges, or ladders on hinges, which could be lowered to the ground. Granaries, and lofts filled with fodder for cattle, composed a part of the building, mingled with numerous stalls and pens for sheep and oxen. The whole was inclosed in a high stone wall, excepting on the side occupied by the extensive dwelling itself.

Owen saw that he was beneath a large archway garnished with two mighty bulls' heads in stone. The family of the Caboches had their armorial bearings, and this was their crest. It is true that they were conferred upon them in jest,

by Louis the Fat, in his satisfaction at the enormous bulk of an animal of the species, which was presented to him by the corporation at a great feast. But the Caboches retained them in good earnest, to the great wrath and contempt of all gentle and noble personages, and possibly on that very account.

A strong door of oak, crossed by many bars and rivets, was before them, which Renaud Caboche bounded forward to open. But it was secured within, and he was obliged to blow a blast on a horn that hung to the latch by a chain. Meanwhile the masters of the Boucherie took their farewell of the rescued visitor, refusing Caboche's hospitable invitation to enter and empty a flagon in celebration of the event. It seemed, indeed, as if a degree of suspicion and alarm took hold on these chiefs of the corporation when they learned, with certainty, that Owen was no emissary or ally of their duke. Every hood was cast back, and every nose touched its owner's girdle with great respect; but Caboche himself looked troubled at the speed with which, after this ceremonial, his suffragans withdrew. Even young Renaud's brow was clouded as he echoed his father's welcome, and the gates of the Master-Chief's residence rolled slowly open. A broad court-yard was then visible, surrounded by a gallery of roughly carved woodwork, into which the principal apartments opened; and that was the only staircase, for there was none in the interior of the house.

The reason of the precautions observed was soon apparent. It was killing-day in the Grande Boucherie, and, though the men were compelled to abandon the work to follow their chief on his rescuing expedition, traces of their suspended activity were visible in every direction. Sheep half skinned; oxen bleeding where they were felled; hogs grunting, as if impatient for their turn, among the saw-dust and straw; calves lamentably bleating and fretting with the ropes that bound them; hideous heaps of gory wool, of severed heads, and streaming entrails, composed the spectacle wherever the eye turned for solace. Every gutter flowed with the dark red tide of slaughter, and the dismal roar which occasionally came from gratings in the pavements seemed to declare that more victims pined for a horrible release, in vaults below the house and yards.

The only object which gave any relief to this sanguinary scene was the figure of a sprightly young damsel, who made her appearance, hastening down a steep flight of stairs, to greet

the arrival. It struck Rhys immediately that she was the very perfection of female beauty! She was plump, she was red-cheeked, all dimply over with smiles and coquetry; and, if she was perhaps a little too short, that imperfection was remedied by her lively costume, and the jaunty manner in which it was worn, with its short crimson petticoat, and handsome lace toque, or head-dress, of many-coloured ribands, floating from a crown-piece of the smallest possible size, to give the streamers a point of adhesion.

So fascinated was Rhys ap Goronwy with this gentle apparition, that Simon Caboche was obliged to repeat to him an order to stable his master's charger in one of the neighbouring stalls ere he heard it. The young damsel meanwhile paused in her descent, staring in great surprise and consternation at the knight and his attendant. Nothing could be more sudden than the change in her whole manner, from lively welcome to awe and bashfulness, when she perceived the stately stranger among those whom she came to meet.

"Be not afraid, dear Gules!—this is our rescued prisoner—not an Armagnac!" said Huéline, hastily. "Methinks he must be in great need of calm, and therefore we will lead him at once to some place of rest—and unarm him—as is the wont, I have heard, of noble dames, when they receive an honoured guest."

"Lodge him in our best chamber, daughter!—in that wherein the duke did repose him until—but no matter!—the best we have," said Caboche. "Our guest is at least not so far Armagnac as to trouble to sleep in that room where my lord of Burgundy lay that he might have quick news of the justice done on the traitor of Orleans! What a yelp the fellow made, like a dog when you tread on his tail! The duke made a merry jest of it, did brave Duke John! 'Caboche,' quoth he, for, in faith, we talk to each other like brothers—'Caboche! is there any music like an enemy's dying groan?'"

"Nay, godfather, the noble chevalier will honour my poor chamber during his abode," said Huéline. "And I will sleep with my sister Gules; for else, methinks, he could rest but little, being all unwont to the dismal roar and plaints of slaughter!"

"Doth he come to kill men, and mislike to hear an ox groan beneath the axe?" said Caboche, with his grim smile. "Nay, demoiselle, it is thine own woman's heart that thou puttest under the knight's breastplate, for I trow well thou hast never yet accustomed thy dainty ears to the music of the Boucherie!

But as thou wilt, for thou art thy father's true daughter in having thy way with us all!"

Huéline smiled with her sweet and irresistible expression of tenderness, and motioned to the knight to advance—when Renaud Caboche exclaimed; with startling suddenness, "But thou hast never unharnessed a knight, Huéline!—I will aid the good squire, and spare thee and Gules the pains."

"You are needed in the Boucherie, my Renaud!—and we will omit no office of courtesy which may be in our rude power to fulfil!" replied Huéline, colouring, but with firmness. Never until then had she addressed her young betrothed by so endearing an additament; and Renaud was pacified.

"It is true, son! Let every man of us swallow a measure of wine, and bare his elbows, and get to work again, for much good meat is spoiling for lack of the knife!" said the liberal Master-Chief, as Owen followed his conductress with much secret satisfaction to the apartment which it seemed she specially desired he should occupy. Renaud continued to gaze after him until he bent his lofty head to enter a doorway on the farther side of the gallery above.

This admitted to a broad passage which, intersected by several others, traversed the roomy abode of Simon Caboche. It came out again on some leads over a range of deserted shambles forming part of the great square of the Boucherie. An irregular and apparently ruinous pile of building arose amidst these slaughter-houses, connected with them by a fixed ladder of considerable height, abutting in a lattice which opened like a folding door. With a grave smile, Huéline requested the knight to be the first in mounting this approach. "And so shall we see, messire," she added, "with what agile daring you will climb the walls of a beleaguered city!"

Owen complied, with a speed and lightness, considering the weight of steel he carried, that put Gules Caboche into a suppressed titter. "Our cats are nothing to him, Mademoiselle Huéline!" she said, with a mixture of gaiety and the respect which superiority of intellect rarely fails to win its possessors. "But why would you not let him sleep in my father's chamber of ceremony? Alas, we have little enough at best to please so noble a visitor!"

What was there in this simple observation to make the minstreless of the Boucherie sigh so profoundly? She made no other reply, and followed up the steps with slow and yet practised feet, declining, with a smile and a pale blush, Owen's offered hand. "I am accustomed to the ascent; these

chambers were mine!" she said, and, opening the lattice, the apartment destined for Owen Tudor appeared in the form of two chambers, communicating one with the other by low and narrow arches of grotesquely-carved oak.

On entering, a stranger would have imagined himself on a level with the ground, for the open lattices of the farther chamber showed a bank of rich flowers in full bloom. And yet the towers of a church, which appeared above it, seemed so inconsiderably elevated in comparison, that the idea struck Owen it must be a terrace-garden formed on the neighbouring roofs. But the chamber in which he found himself was so singularly garnished, that it might alone have engrossed his surprise, especially remembering that it belonged to a young woman. A large collection of stuffed serpents, and reptiles of the most hideous forms, hung from the ceiling; the walls were covered with shelves of dusty manuscripts, sometimes curled and blackened by fire; innumerable phials and instruments of chirurgery lay scattered about. A small black organ, ancient enough to have been played on by St. Cecilia, occupied one corner of the chamber; in another there was an old and much-worn arm-chair, which, in spite of its antiquity, seemed anxiously, and even religiously, preserved. A collection of tools, resembling those used by masons, hung on the wall, including, of course, a trowel, a line, and a plummet.

Huéline explained these appearances before they had time to produce any unpleasing effect. "These are my father's relics,—all that the kind Cabochiens could save from the flames which the Armagnacs kindled in our home," she said, continuing, as she led the way into the inner chamber, "excepting the contents of this apartment—presents which, in his prosperous estate, he received from various free cities and states of Flanders, in testimony of their liking to his cause."

Owen was surprised, when he entered, at the elegance and even splendour of the decorations of the bedchamber. It was hung with arras, very beautifully wrought with designs from the favourite poem of the middle ages, the "Romance of the Rose," representing the progress of love, in a singular and not very decent allegory. The alcove and counterpane of the bed it contained, were of silk damask, which, in complication and beauty of design, could not be surpassed by the most elaborate productions of modern art. The stools and tables were carved and gilded with a luxury of embellishment that showed more of the artist than of the artisan. A parchment, beautifully illuminated, apparently of verses, in a strange and marvellous

character to Owen, but which a modern schoolboy would have instantly recognised as Greek, lay open on one of the tables. A lute and mandolin were near; and many articles of female selection, such as flowers and embroidery, were scattered about the room. The whole scene was such a contrast in elegance and comfort to the rest of the Boucherie, that Owen was amazed.

Without affecting to observe his surprise, but no doubt secretly gratified with its signs, Huéline modestly informed the guest that he was in his sleeping chamber, and asked permission to unarm him. This office of hospitality was so usually performed by the ladies or damsels of the house, that Owen neither felt nor offered any objection. But his courtesy was somewhat unusual, when, finding that Huéline could not easily reach the upper pieces of his armour, he knelt before her on both knees. There was as much homage in his look as in his attitude, and Huéline became suddenly brilliant with an expression of joy and tenderness that gave her beauty its most natural and lustrous character.

Neither of his fair attendants was, in truth, skilled in the office they had assumed, much less in removing such cumbrous and involved masses of steel network as formed the masterpiece of Rhys ap Geronwy. Gules Caboche was truly declared by her brother to understand nothing of unharnessing, and her office was confined to receiving the pieces of armour as Huéline unclasped or unloosed them. But the latter's natural dexterity supplied her want of experience; and, during the process, the group might have furnished no bad ideal for a Venus disarming Mars, but that Owen's youth was too immature for the warlike god, and there was more dignity in Huéline's manner than the mother of the loves is said to assume on such occasions. But her mistakes excited the irrepressible laughter of the merry Gules; and Huéline herself at times smiled secretly at a strangeness in the warlike habiliments of her guest, which even denizens of the Boucherie could not fail to perceive.

Owen's garb beneath his armour was not of the richest materials; but the beauty and power of his person needed no splendid ornaments in the eyes of women to excite admiration. It is possible, even, that the beggared daughter of Jean de Troye was in her heart not displeased to observe that there was at least one point of resemblance and sympathy between them! But there seemed some others; for, whenever their eyes met, both coloured deeply; and if they touched each

[illegible] by chance, in the course of the unarming, though it were merely with the tips of the fingers, the blood in the veins of both tingled to the point of contact. Huéline, indeed, but rarely raised her eyes, and seemed quite absorbed in her task; but there was a sparkling consciousness spread over all her complexion, that showed she was not unaware how constantly and fervidly the gaze of Owen was fixed upon her. The closeness of position into which they were brought by the incidents of the unarming added to the embarrassment of both; and yet Owen was grieved in his soul when the work was accomplished.

A bath was meanwhile prepared, a usual part of an honourable reception in the fifteenth century. But when all was ready, Owen, inexperienced as he was, thought the minstrelsess took an opportunity to cause them to be alone. When the servant-wenches who brought the water were gone, and she had herself carefully perfumed it with an infusion of some sweet essence, and it seemed proper that she and Gules should retire, Huéline suddenly recollected that they had not provided a robe for the guest. In castles and houses where visitors of rank were expected, magnificent robes of furs and velvets were kept ready in the wardroom for use during their stay, few knights, or even nobles, travelling with much superfluity of apparel. Apologizing, with a smile whose witchery Owen thought might have excused the want of everything, Huéline seemed suddenly to recollect herself, and despatched Gules Caboche to procure her father's robe of estate, which he wore as Master-Chief of the Boucherie.

And thus were the knight and minstrelsess left alone; and, though utterly unused to such situations, the young mountaineer felt that it was a precious opportunity to express the feelings that glowed in his heart, which he took to be merely the admiration and gratitude her successful generosity might well inspire. But Huéline seemed as if she dreaded some such effusion; and his first tremulous words were immediately interrupted by her sweet tones, that wavered not, but were kept steady by a strong effort. "Speak not, messire, of thanks, which so little repay the service you have rendered us! The life you have preserved will be too short for that! —I sought to speak with you alone, fair knight!" she continued, with a degree of confusion and hesitation that set Owen's pulse in rapid motion. "Gules is kind, but she talks much—as is, they say, our sex's wont—wherefore I defame her not. But I must needs remind you, that those of the

Boucherie are devoted Burgundians.—I would have you free to depart, alas! for it may sooner be your pleasure so to do than ours!—'Tis therefore I have made this chamber yours—it has a secret egress unknown even to the Cabochiens—which a woman has explored, and 'tis not too difficult or dangerous to pass—so that if ever—if too soon—for we live in dangerous times, and the tranquillity of Paris is as the moonlight on troubled waves—as the slumber of the condemned!—Let me show you how you may depart at any time—without wings—from the Boucherie."

"A dungeon could not be unpleasing, charmed by the sound of so melodious a voice!" said Owen, with warmth; but, without seeming to heed the compliment, the minstreless rapidly traversed the chamber of the alcove, and, throwing open a lattice, stepped forth in the lofty garden at which Owen had marvelled on his first entrance. A flower, that until then he had never seen, assailed all his senses at once with overpowering beauty and fragrance, for the Syrian rose bloomed in a waste of coloured fragrance in every part of this strange garden.

"My father was poor—he loved to grow his own simples—and he gradually covered the roofs of his neighbours with these plants!" said the minstreless, proudly, even when calling her sire "poor," as if the contrast between his destinies and himself struck her in an exalting light. "Yonder is his house—at least its blackened remains! Do you not perceive the ruins, knight, on this side of the tower of St. Jacques?"

"I see what seem to be the roof and timbers of a dwelling almost destroyed by fire," replied Owen.

"It is easy to pass over these terraces to it—and it is not so far destroyed but that one in danger may make shift to reach the ground!" said Huéline. "He will then find himself in the great street of St. Jacques—opposite another deserted house—the house of Maître Nicolas Flamel! You have heard of him, messire?"

"Father Ambrosius did oft speak of him as a youth of marvellous science and application!" replied Owen, who was vaguely troubled at this revelation. It was disagreeable to him, in some way or another, to find that the young minstreless had a means of egress unknown to her protectors.

"I knew him only as a grey-bearded sage—he was my father's friend and close confabulist!" said Huéline, with a slight smile. "Together they dreamed fine dreams—but both are well wakened now! My father is in the deepest

dungeon of yonder Châtelet whose shadow broods over us like a stationary cloud—and the wise Maître Nicolas sleeps with his wiser wife, Pernelle, in the sepulchre which themselves had sculptured by magic hands—Italian hands, messire!—in the church of St. Jacques!—unless what our marvel-loving Parisians constantly affirm be true, that they buried faggots of wood in their place, and fled to enjoy their unbounded riches and immortality in countries where science is not so severely punished as in France! You may almost distinguish the noble gate which Nicolas raised and most richly adorned to please the meddling priests of St. Jacques! It is covered with strange hieroglyphics, that time only can decipher—yonder! at the corner of the street of the Notaries which leads into a haunt of death and luxury—the Cemetery of the Innocents!"

"What doth luxury in such a place, with death?" said Owen, startled and perplexed at this expression.

"We Parisians are a strange race—we rouge the cheeks of our corpses to make death more ghastly, deeming to make him fair!" replied Huéline. "But what will not the avarice of man? The Cemetery of the Innocents is a churchyard walled round in arches—and the dark and narrow passages formed by those receptacles of the dead are occupied by shops of the lightest and most frivolous merchandise! Jewellers, tailors, glovers, mercers, toymen, and armourers, sir knight! display their showy wares among escutcheons and tablets, and dreary monumental effigies! The inscription on the tombstones that pave the passages are nearly effaced beneath the tramp of merry loungers!—Only there is no hypocrisy in the name we give it! The charnel-house of the Innocents disguises nothing!"

"I shall not buy French armour there, lest it smell of the tomb!" said Owen, in great disgust.

"It is enough—let us return—Gules is light of approach as a lapwing," said Huéline with a sigh and a smile. "I have shown you my secret—but I know not why I fear for you! You are safe, if friendship can keep you so!"

"What wilful bird would leave the cage that had so beautiful and kind a keeper?" exclaimed Owen.

Huéline glanced at him with an expression of tenderness that was perhaps natural to her, but which stirred Owen's soul to its depths, so sweet and penetrating was its light.

"Yet 'tis little wise to leave the door open to birds of wandering wing!" she replied, after a moment's pause,

"Nevertheless, 'tis done; and, by my goodwill, nought should ever pine in imprisonment! Here is Gules Caboche."

They returned into the first chamber in time to prevent the daughter of the Master-Chief from noticing that they had ever left it—and Owen was abandoned to his rosy bath and the most delicious of reveries—the dream of first love! Not that the haughty descendant of Arthur called it by that name; but what else was the exquisite and never-wearying satisfaction which he took in remembering every look, word, and gesture—every act, every expression of the features—the very waving of the air that floated musically around the daughter of the Parisian demagogue? And yet he could not afford to indulge long in this paradise of thought, when the reality awaited him, and he was arrayed with much more rapidity than it is probable that any one—even Huéline—expected. He arrived in the gallery by which he had ascended from Caboche's slaughter-house, certainly before his approach was anticipated. The Master-Chief and Huéline were engaged in escorting to the gates, with great marks of consideration and honour, the one-eyed beggar of the parvis of *Notre Dame*!

Whatever the conversation had been, that which Owen could not prevent himself from overhearing seemed not to be of the most amicable cast.

"You will live to repent this, Simon!" said the one-eyed beggar. "Meanwhile I leave you to your own devices, and I trust you will pardon me if I do not return to visit you until you are rid of this young and remarkably handsome spy!"

"Such will he never prove—I answer with my life!—though that be but a poor pledge!" said Huéline, vehemently. "But we will grieve the less, my Lord St. Pierre, that already your frequent presence in the Boucherie must give rise to some suspicion among the Armagnacs—which your absence may dissipate."

"In truth it is best—it is well—that we should part!" returned the Burgundian emissary. "Farewell, messires and gentle damsel! for it seems to me the duke's last friends in Paris desert him!"

And, in spite of the remonstrances of Caboche, and, what was more likely to move him, the silence of Huéline, the mysterious mendicant took his departure from the Boucherie. The words he had overheard convinced Owen of the reality and depth of the conspiracy that the Armagnacs dreaded, but

made him conclude that no immediate danger was to be expected from it. His very presence in the Boucherie might defeat any—and meanwhile the wings of the passing moment dripped heavily from the rich dews of passion!

We are sorry to confess that neither the anger nor the departure of the Burgundian emissary affected Huéline so deeply as they might at another time. She even remembered both circumstances with satisfaction on the night of that life-stamping day, when she lay restlessly tossing beside the slumbering Gules Caboche.

"He!—with his wealth, his pride, his wisdom, and his years—could it be jealousy? Was there not something more than the zeal of party in it?" mused she. "Why, then, a poor adventurer from a foreign land, young, rash, impetuous as the winds, may well——" The rest of the meditation was a vague delicious dream, which we cannot undertake to follow over its wilderness of flowering hopes!

CHAPTER XV.

"Woo no daughter but a king's."

"And wherefore did they bid me beware of the children of song, since thou art its brightest daughter, and didst save my life at hazard of thy own!" murmured Owen Tudor. "Sweet Huéline, let us read no more—I would gaze at thee!—what poesy is so lovely as thy face? Oh, I could gaze for ever on thee thus, and never weary!"

"But thou wearyest me, dear knight, to gaze for ever on me—thus!" returned Huéline, with a pettish, sparkling shower of tears.

The knight and minstreless were alone in the chamber of Jean de Troye, as it was called, from the relics of the mediciner being deposited in it. They were engaged in a very usual and favourite amusement with both—the perusal of the "Romance of the Rose." Owen's curiosity was excited to this work by the tapestry pictures in his bed-chamber, and Huéline took pleasure in teaching him how to recite its verses with the true Parisian and minstrel rhythm.

Owen had now been several weeks in the Boucherie—a much longer period than had been calculated by any of the parties to his residence there.

On discovering with certainty that he was not a Burgun-

dian, the University took up the cause of their maltreated scholar with the utmost zeal. This stirred the Armagnacs in favour of Owen Tudor; and, above all, Taneguy Duchâtel stood his firm friend during the heat of the persecution. Even he could only counteract the efforts of Owen's learned enemies, by causing him to remain in the Boucherie, as in a sanctuary, and persuading the constable to answer the remonstrances of the University by a declaration that his government did not venture to incur the danger of a popular outbreak in an attempt to seize him by force. But it was graciously added, that no notice would be taken of any attempt which the University and its armed band of scholars might choose to make in effecting the purpose themselves! And, as the rabble of Paris and the University were known to be very good friends, the former would probably make no resistance to them! With this bitter jest, and every species of annoyance, in the shape of deputations and complaints, it could devise, the University was obliged to content itself; for the Cabochiens were evidently resolved to defend the rights of hospitality in the person of their Welsh guest.

This resolution was doubtless owing, in great measure, to the influence of Huéline, whose mastery of intellect subjected the Boucherie, and, consequently, the whole Burgundian party in Paris, to her will. And that was vehemently in favour of the generous stranger who had rescued her from an ignominious and dreadful doom! She won the Caboches to share her own ardent hope that the Chevalier Sauvage would easily be gained over to the Burgundian cause, and lend the aid of his brilliant valour in the dangerous projects a-foot to restore the sway of Duke John. His seeming quality of a poor knight-adventurer—the injuries he had received from the Armagnacs—the facility with which such changes were made in this civil strife—might well encourage the expectation. A late example had occurred in the person of the famous L'Isle Adam, governor of Pontoise, who transferred his allegiance to the Duke of Burgundy so lightly, that he himself declared it was but changing a colour. Huéline knew not the strength of the political and personal feelings that bound Owen to the party most opposed to England and Henry V. Nor was she born in an atmosphere to appreciate the barbaric notions of fidelity and honour which Owen brought with him from his native wilds.

Any anxiety that Owen might have felt on the score of his prolonged exile in the Boucherie was set at rest by an assu-

mise from Sir Taneguy, that as soon as the army, which was preparing to march into Normandy against the English, was ready, he should be permitted to join in the expedition, in spite of all the doctors in France! The preparations, indeed, lingered; but the promise furnished Owen with an excuse for resigning himself without uneasiness to the enjoyments he discovered in the Grande Boucherie. The reader, aware of his exceeding pride of birth and rank, his aspiring and poetical imagination, will perhaps marvel what attractions he could find within the walls of the hideous shambles of Paris.

Undoubtedly there was much in the constitution and manners of the Boucherie to excite the attention of an inquisitive traveller. But Owen was not an inquisitive traveller!—the species was not yet invented. A magician had thrown his spell over him, whose touch transformed the most alien objects into dazzling illusions of splendour and beauty! The horrible sights and sounds of the Boucherie—the coarse habits and ferocious discourse of the Caboches—ceased to affect him disagreeably. The apartment of Huéline, which he occupied in the Boucherie, was an oasis that Love amused himself in turning into a paradise, whose glittering leaves and flowers shut out all the world beside.

Love—first love!—the fierce passion likely to be kindled in blood so inflammable, in youth so inexperienced, in an imagination so fervid and unchilled by the cold embrace of reality, in a heart so athirst for pleasure and excitement! And that he was loved again, who can doubt? So beautiful, so young, so valiant, and so generous!—was he not all that the impassioned dreams of the young poetess had sought in the vacancy of existence?—all that was necessary for her exalted and tender fancy to deify?

Love delights in reconciling contradictions; else it would seem unlikely that a passion, whose essence is sympathy, could have arisen between Owen Tudor and Huéline de Troye.

Owen exulted in a royal blood of unknown antiquity—Huéline was the daughter of a poor apothecary, who boasted himself sprung from the dregs of the people. Owen's aspirations and tastes were all of the loftiest aristocracy; and we have seen with what passion Huéline identified herself with the fierce mob of Paris! The whole course of their existence seemed to oppose them equally. Owen was brought up amidst savage solitudes, in proud though fallen state, nursed with lofty visions and prophecies! Huéline was a daughter of cities, whose earliest career had been its brightest and most

prosperous,—one stunned by the clash of hard realities! Owen sought to commence his active life as an Armagnac—from her earliest childhood Huéline was devoted to the party of Burgundy!

During a long period, her father was the foremost leader of the Parisian populace, whose constantly fermenting mass of misery has, from age to age, burst forth in explosions so dire. The ascendency he acquired over Simon Caboche gave him the sway of a great material force, which his sagacity enabled him to wield with extraordinary effect. For a time, Jean de Troye was the idol of the Parisian mob; and, secretly supported by the Duke of Burgundy, he figured prominently in the earlier disturbances that followed the murder of the Duke of Orleans. But he promulgated laws, and introduced reforms, which disgusted both parties with him, while the frenzied excesses that the populace abandoned themselves to during their mastery excited the resistance of despair in every class but the lowest. It was believed that even the chiefs of his own faction were not deeply grieved when Jean de Troye was confined in one of those terrible dungeons of the Châtelet called the oubliettes.

The admirers of the solitary system have not given sufficient attention to these prisons, which, in the middle ages, carried it to perfection. The very name meant—Forgotten! Whoever entered an oubliette was sealed up for life and death. A trapdoor closed the captives in a dungeon wherein no ray of light ever penetrated. The gaoler who lowered their food was forbidden to speak to them, and it was only known by the rattle of their chains, as they rose to receive it, that they were alive. This was all the information which during three years reached the outward world concerning Jean de Troye. He was alive, and yet dead. No friendly eyes had ever beheld him since the day of the Armagnac triumph; no friendly voice was ever permitted to reach him; and, but for the persevering exertions and petitions of his daughter, his very memory would have faded away among the changeable populace whom he served at such fatal cost.

Huéline was the only child of this unfortunate demagogue, and inherited his political notions, deepened by the fervour of a woman's feelings and the sense of accumulated wrong. Moreover, she was born with that passionate sensibility which, when it bursts in song, is inspiration—in deeds, is often but a sublime madness! Jean de Troye was one of the most learned men of his age, and his chief delight was to cultivate the rich

[illegible] of some of [illegible] was a [illegible] was also a [illegible]

[illegible] confined to very few, [illegible] contemporaries— [illegible] Montgomery's re- [illegible] otherwise [illegible] paid no [illegible] at the [illegible] by de- [illegible] done [illegible] Denis him- [illegible] with the append- [illegible] friend of [illegible] who discovered [illegible] to belong to [illegible] the later Rosi- [illegible] system of polity [illegible]

[illegible] that elevates [illegible] with the dominant [illegible] to be [illegible] that [illegible] the ground [illegible] of the masses— [illegible] none but [illegible] were persuaded to her in [illegible] An order [illegible] and enterprise so [illegible] could [illegible] And, fashioned by [illegible] and pleasure, the [illegible] her father's stormy [illegible] the languor and degra- [illegible] almost intolerable. The [illegible] displayed in her performance of the part of [illegible] to life itself.

And yet Hueline had long been betrothed to a rich, young, and by no means ill-looking husband, in the person of Renaud Caboche, who loved her to a mad excess. She was solemnly pledged to become his wife, as soon as her father was released [illegible] his dungeon. Until then she had as solemnly vowed,

that she would never entertain any idea of happiness or festivity, which indeed, under such circumstances, dwelling within sight of her father's place of torture, was scarcely possible.

The need for love ever athirst in such a heart, the generosity and compassion of her nature, gratitude and policy—rather than any emotion of warmer tenderness—won her consent to this arrangement. Jean de Troye's fall left his orphan friendless and penniless on the world—and Simon Caboche, himself suffering under grievous fines and penalties for his share in executing the learned demagogue's behests, immediately constituted himself her father and protector. When subsequently his sole remaining son and inheritor became enamoured of the orphan, Simon Caboche encouraged and aided him in every manner, until, vanquished by so much generosity, and the necessity of securing the aid of the Boucherie in effecting her father's release, Huéline made the compact above recorded. But the prospect of passing her life in the shambles, with the Caboches, seemed to possess few allurements to her, considering the recklessness with which she hazarded it. The vehement but sensual and gross passion of the young master-butcher could indeed possess but few charms for a woman who mingled so much of spiritual tenderness and enthusiasm with all the fire and passion of her temperament.

And yet they loved—Huéline de Troye and Owen Tudor—the minstreless of the Boucherie and the descendant of the Cambrian kings! Nature takes no heed of the distinctions invented by man; so beautiful a pair could not meet, and feel that they were unsuited to each other by mere accidents of birth and training.

Huéline was formed to catch and enthral a fancy so warm and poetically coloured as that of the young Welsh chieftain. It is true that she was two or three years older than her lover; but the circumstance, united with her rare talents, only added to her power. It mingled a degree of awe with his love, such as the ancestors of his race were wont to pay to their inspired priestesses. A warmer and fiercer passion gradually won upon this spiritual one, but scarcely perceivably, for a time, even to Owen himself.

It was not in human nature indeed—at all events, not in youthful human nature—to resist the influences to which Owen was exposed. He found himself a prisoner, in all but the name, in the gloomy precincts of the Grande Boucherie, where the only congenial object was a beautiful woman, around whom

[illegible] story. [illegible] It was [illegible] that, [illegible] re- [illegible] [illegible] now. [illegible] reason [illegible] of the [illegible]

[illegible] with whom [illegible] imagination. [illegible] [illegible] that for [illegible] of the [illegible] [illegible] from [illegible] And [illegible] in which [illegible] first every [illegible] genius en- [illegible] pre- [illegible] It [illegible] [illegible] pupil of [illegible]

[illegible] and alluring [illegible] conjunction of [illegible] opportunity to glow [illegible] glimpses by [illegible] of destiny, [illegible] all the powers of her [illegible] All other [illegible] in the devouring [illegible] again!

[illegible] attachment to minstrelsy was evinced by the harp which he was in the habit of carrying about with him. It was, therefore, very natural that he should take pleasure in adding to his own wild stock the more refined effusions of the land whither he had wandered. And once again Hueline re- [illegible] the exercise of her disused art. Highly cultivated

mistress as she was of it, the French minstreless took a new and eager pleasure in uniting her poesy to the melodies of the stranger. The national music of Wales presented characteristics of wild and melancholy grandeur that delighted the once brilliant and joyous poetess of Champagne! Royal and heroic bards first taught the Cymric harp its strains; but the plaintive notes of lamentation and defeat, which mingled incessantly amidst all their defiance and martial energy, was in harmony with the conflict in her nature.

It is true that she no longer composed, and that she thus kept the letter of the farewell wherewith she resigned her chaplet. Perhaps she feared to trust herself with the expression of the new inspiration that glowed in her heart—hoped still to deceive herself—would not listen to the language which must utter her secret soul! In the virginity of passion there is a delicacy that shrinks even from its own contemplation. But she remembered the lays of her glorious dawn, the beautiful chansons and romances that made her name renowned in France! Once more she poured them forth into the enchanted ears of her lover—brilliant, light, gay, and captivating as the wine of her father's native province—of Champagne—even as she herself had sung! And if a deeper glow of tenderness, more fiery touches of passion, marked the progress of a new science in her soul in the versions she gave of those remembered lays, she herself knew not always how or why she changed the word or the sentiment, or even at times the whole meaning of the legend! It is certain she was no longer so inclined to the sarcastic gaiety and raillery that pleased the laughing malice of the Parisians.

The Caboches had very little taste for the finer arts of life, and were busied in political agitation and struggle with the usurping craftsmen who, on the breaking up of their privileges, rushed in to share the wrecks. Almost from the first, Renaud took a great dislike to the Armagnac knight, and shunned his company as much as possible. Yet he could not reasonably expect that so honourable a guest should be left alone, and he seemed to have no pretence for finding fault, as his sister Gules was supposed to be always of the company which Huéline afforded him. But Gules had her own important avocations to attend to, that frequently called her away from the remote apartment containing the relics of Jean de Troye. And, even when present, she was in general too much engaged with her proper smiling reveries, and in knitting lace, or in playful warfare with Rhys, who insisted on

[illegible]

[illegible] What [illegible] should [illegible] familiar, [illegible] park of the [illegible]

[illegible] ology, in [illegible] with [illegible] in it, [illegible] was [illegible] she had [illegible] to trust [illegible] her well to [illegible] wander in [illegible] itself—the [illegible] Yet, when to gratify him, and in the vague longing after the lofty and mysterious in destiny which animates spirits of sublimer order, she exhausted her eloquence in the assertion of their influence over humanity, Owen murmured doubts, and seemed to wish not to believe!

A woman so alive to the very breath of feeling could not long doubt that the fervid sentiments glowing in her own bosom were shared by her lover. Long ere Owen himself, in the modesty of his youth and inexperience, perceived in what a net he was entangled, his beauteous capturer exulted in the hope that she had enthralled him for ever! Passion gleamed in his *eyes*, trembled in his voice, paled the youthful

bloom on his cheek! All that puzzled the French minstreless was, that he gave it no utterance in word or deed that he could by possibility control. And yet, on this airy basis, she built as magnificent a structure of hope and happiness as ever enamoured fairy raised for a palace wherein love and pleasure might securely dwell.

We have seen—Huéline, too, was dazzled by that splendid mist which at times rises from the surging sea of human misery—that calenture of noble spirits—that vision of universal happiness and regeneration that, like a new creation, perhaps requires a new chaos as a preliminary. But now she united, in some inexplicable manner, her sire's dream of an enfranchised and triumphant democracy with her own of a noble and knightly leader, whose chivalrous qualities should throw lustre on the cause and its vulgar instruments! A hero who should at once lead a populace and dictate laws to nobles and kings, concentrated all the glorious rays of her enthusiasm; and this her idolizing fancy shaped in the young and generous errant-knight of Wales. To free her father—and with him a nation—redeem herself from the Caboches and the Boucherie—become the wife of the beloved and beautiful warrior!—almost impossibilities as they were—became, in her glowing reveries, feasible and likely purposes.

The wife!—Huéline was aware that great obstacles intervened to this consummation. She felt—and felt with an intensity which only a soul so lofty, trammeled by lowly destinies, can feel—that, poor and desperate adventurer as the Welsh knight seemed, the prejudices of caste separated them like creatures of different elements! Owen's pride of birth she early detected, though she by no means fathomed its depth and rooted hold. The indistinct but towering grandeur of his aspirations were too congenial to her own to pass unobserved. Yet she despaired not. She felt the power and ascendency of her own bright and daring genius. She despised, as unjust and unreal, the prejudices that opposed her; for she knew herself on more than equality, in all natural points, with the most distinguished of her sex. She confided in her beauty, in her wit, in the subtlety and penetration of her talents, in the magnitude of the services she could render, in the love she had inspired—to vanquish those phantoms of pride—ignorant, of course, of Owen's claims to royal birth, and of the dazzling superstition which raised his hopes to such starry heights of fate.

Under these impressions, the minstreless multiplied around Owen all the allurements that genius, love, and beauty can lend to woman. But little, indeed, did she suspect the nature of the struggle thus kindled and fanned in her lover's bosom.

Huéline soon discerned, and, for awhile, with pride and satisfaction, the reverential homage that chastened all the increasing fervour of Owen's feelings. And yet it was not easy for a Parisian girl of the fifteenth century—or, indeed, of any century—to understand that Druidic veneration of the sex that mingled in the most ardent reveries of the young stranger from the Sacred Isle. She perceived, it is true, with the delight which the freshness of everything, and, above all, of the human heart, inspires, that Owen loved for the first time—for the first time contemplated woman with the eyes of passion. But she could not fathom wherefore he shunned all the numerous opportunities she gave him for the expression of the sentiments that burned in his eyes—why, when they were alone, his whole manner changed, and became so cold and reserved—why, often as he covered her hands with kisses, he never ventured to raise their fluttering flight to that warm bower of roses that seemed to woo them to delight—why, finally, it almost seemed as if he shunned her company—was pleased no longer with those delicious and enamouring lays which flowed in music from her lips! Unhappily, Huéline began to imagine that, in her quality of instructress, she had clothed herself in too cold a dignity—and her natural warmth and tenderness suggested but too sweet and powerful a means of dispelling it!

Thus far Owen struggled fairly with the passion that wooed him in such exquisite forms. When first he became conscious of its nature and power, he made a firm and resolute stand, unhappily! If he had betaken himself to flight, it was perhaps yet possible to secure a triumph. But it was so pure, so delicious, so irresistible a happiness to behold her—to listen to her charmed voice—to feel the breath of her movement pass him like the waves of music—that he could not resolve to deprive himself of them! His ambition and pride rushed, in all their glittering masses, to his aid, and gave him a false security. They persuaded him, that the idea of relinquishing the magnificent promises of his horoscope, of debasing the royalty of his blood and the grandeur of his destiny by a union with the ward of a butcher's charity, the daughter of a rebellious apothecary, was an impossibility. On the other hand, his chivalrous sentiments, the modesty of

his youth, the reverence that entered so largely in his love, respect for the rights of hospitality (inspired by a barbaric education), persuaded him that he ran no risk of attempting so signal a breach of every law of honour as must be involved in any unlawful gratification of his passion.

But when Huéline applied all the resources of her voluptuous and subtle genius, in union with her personal beauty, to subdue a resistance whose nature she only partially comprehended, Owen knew no longer how to defend himself. The more he resisted, the more resistlessly did the bright minstreless scatter her sorceries! Still Huéline felt herself foiled—still she perceived that her loving artifices were baffled by some invisible but infrangible obstacle—that she fell short of her aim in a surprising manner, as if she shot with arrows of fire, that rushed themselves away as they sped to their mark! Owen could not but yield, at times, to the overpowering impulse of the emotions thus enkindled in his young blood;—but those tremulous outbursts died away in silence, or in entreaties for pardon, which seemed by their remorse and shame to confess sentiments far different from those Huéline sought to inspire. The first love of woman is always pure—and seeks only to unite itself with purity.

With the instinct of her sex, Huéline sought in jealousy a stimulant to her lover's laggard passion. She tortured him with displays of affection for Renaud Caboche, partly feigned to lull his suspicions, and partly the result of a short-sighted feeling of compassion. But it excited in Owen a vehement sentiment of rivalry, heightened by the silent but scowling dislike and mistrust which he felt the young butcher cherished against him. He was witness of rough caresses and freedoms that excited at once his wrath and envy to the highest, rendered the more poignant by the reproach and coquetry of Huéline's glances at him even while suffering his rival's tenderness!

Everything contributed to the march of the catastrophe; but specially some circumstances with which Owen was unacquainted. The dangerous steps of Huéline were precipitated by secret movements and events among her party, of which he was of course ignorant. When Owen first arrived in the Boucherie, the project of restoring the power of the Duke of Burgundy by a Parisian insurrection was a favourite one with the whole party, but was as yet but vaguely formed. The general disarmament of the Burgundian mob, the vigilant precautions observed, and the concentration of the military power of the Armagnacs around and in the capital, made it

but little remote from an impossibility. But now the rumoured intentions of the constable and his adherents to march into Normandy against the King of England, gave new hopes to the designs of their bosom foes.

The triumph of a Burgundian insurrection was also essential to the projects of love and ambition that filled the heart of Huéline. But the Norman expedition would carry with it him whom she meant to be the demigod of the storm! There was consequently no time to be lost in winning him to the party he was to lead. Moreover, many fears assailed her: the jealousy of Renaud Caboche was but fretfully asleep, and a sharper espial had reappeared on the scene, whom she had some reason to deem animated by a similar quickening sentiment.

This was the one-eyed beggar of the parvis, or, as must by this time be conjectured, the prime agent of the Duke of Burgundy in Paris—the subtle, intriguing, and daring Sir Pierre de Giac.

This man was a favoured counsellor of John the Fearless, and was held to be as crafty as his master was ferocious. He was a peculiar object of hatred with the Orleanists, as he was suspected to be the adviser of the murder of their chief. This opinion was partly founded on the fact that he was of low birth, having raised himself by his talents and court intrigues to rank and power from a very poor station at the bar of Paris. The nobles always concluded—and with good reason—that persons who had risen from the classes they oppressed, detested them, and laboured at their destruction. But the favour of the duke, and his own sagacity, preserved de Giac from the effects of their malice and envy; and it was probably the union of the subtle qualities of his mind with the headstrong violence of his master that produced the singular mixture of artifice and cruelty observable in the deeds of John the Fearless.

Whether in the hope to profit more by the influence Huéline exercised, or that his cold and misanthropic heart was in reality touched by her beauty and accomplishments, De Giac had often betrayed sentiments which, if Huéline had been ambitious only, might have excited her attention. But she detested and despised the cruel and calculating agent, while she served the daring principal; and the cold cheer she made him effectually froze his loving aspirations, if, in reality, he had any. For it was extremely doubtful. De Giac was a [illegible]f dissimulation. He feared the Caboches—he was

too old and withered to hope anything personal, and, plebeian as he was, he had, as is the wont of such men, adopted and exaggerated all the haughtiest prejudices of the rank he had reached. Huéline was to him, too, a butcher's ward, an apothecary's daughter!

After staying away for some time, in great disgust and alarm at the Armagnac knight's admission into the Boucherie, this personage, still more alarmed and disgusted at his protracted sojourn, secretly revisited it—secretly, at least, to Owen Tudor. Huéline soon discerned his evil influence. Feigning only to be animated by political motives, De Giac managed to infuse suspicions of a different character into Simon Caboche himself! In him it was that the minstreless most dreaded the formation of such mistrust. She knew his devoted fondness for his son—his jealousy of the honour of his blood—the suddenness and brutality of his passions—that he was prouder of his hereditary dignity as Chief of the Butchers than a monarch of his diadem, and than a Spanish hidalgo of the purity of his descent and race. He was animated by an unceasing thirst for revenge against the whole Armagnac party, which might easily, on provocation, concentrate against a member of it. Three of his sons had perished in the course of the conflicts between the factions. One, who was slain in battle, he never seemed to regret; but to the manes of Philibert and Lambert, who were hung till they rotted on the gibbet of Montfaucon, he had vowed a hecatomb! He began to grow impatient of the gentle but firm repulses his overtures received, and of Huéline's excuses and promises of their guest's speedy conversion.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SONG OF THE MERMAID.

The minstreless of the Boucherie was unhappily insensible to her own peril in the task she had undertaken. All she learned of Owen Tudor, of his noble and uncontaminated youth, his high honour and integrity, spread her confidence in him boundlessly. She imagined that the struggle in his heart was only between pride and love, and both sentiments were stirred to the utmost in her own bosom with the thought. She loved with the frenzied fervour of a poetical inspiration as well as the warmth of an empassioned woman's heart. Meanwhile, Owen's tottering resolutions and inward conflict gave a languid

fire to his eyes, a melancholy and hesitation to his whole demeanour, that added compassion to the tenderness which already melted her soul to the most dangerous impressions.

The multiplication of those fascinations, the bewildering sorceries of allurement poured forth by the enchantress with the profusion and endless variety of the diamond mines of genius, could not always be withstood by one merely human. And Owen was very human—in the first flush and vigour of his strong and fiery passions! Penetrating as she was, Huéline could not understand the full power of the *philtres* of passion she administered, for, after all, she was a woman, and her lover was a man. The purity of the flame of love in woman misguides her but too oft! Huéline's soul ached only with desire to know the truth—to be assured by his own lips that he loved! Unhappy sex, that believes in the lips of man!—while Owen's—but amidst all the wanderings of his imagination, honour continually brought them back again to an innocent fold. The recollection of his prophecy frequently came to his rescue: his hopes in it were rekindled by the very circumstance of the directness of the application of its warnings to the minstreless of the Boucherie! But it gave him an imaginary strength. The voices of reason and honour grew fainter as those of passion waxed louder and more irresistibly musical. And the efforts which the syren made to vanquish this strange resistance inspired him with the most dangerous of the phantasies that had yet visited him. The consuming thought entered his soul that only his own hesitation stood in his way to the supreme happiness of being beloved by a creature so beautiful and gifted that she seemed to Owen one of another and loftier species of humanity!

And it was under such circumstances that Gules Caboche found herself under the necessity of attending to some domestic arrangements which she said would detain her until nightfall, when she would be sure to return and kindle the lamps. There was not much that was unusual in this. Gules rarely neglected her household duties on any account; and of late the most especial appeared to her to attend to the comforts of Rhys ap Goronwy. The good squire had been absent on a customary excursion to the Grand Châtelet, with his master's entreaties to be summoned from his sanctuary—and brought back better news than usual:—Taneguy Duchâtel sent word that the first divisions of the army of Normandy were moving from the garrisons beyond Paris, that the Dauphin was to join it almost immediately, and that, as

he commanded the guard of the young prince, Owen was to hold himself in readiness to depart at a few hours' notice, under his protection! Gules unaccountably wept at this joyful intelligence, and, thinking she could not make too much of her guest now she was about to lose him, she descended to see with her own eyes that he was refreshed with the best viands and the oldest wines in the house.

Nor was there anything unusual in Huéline's presence in the chamber containing the wrecks of her sire's possessions. Gules and her betrothed sister usually spent many hours of the day in it, endeavouring to enliven the species of imprisonment endured by their guest—to charm away his languid hours with lively female chat, and the thousand nameless attentions which only women know how to pay to a beloved guest. Little fragrant presents of flowers and fruit—reading—music—laughter—sent the hours dancing past—without counting the dangerous intoxication of pleasure the lovers felt in each other's company, which might alone have supplied the place of all things else.

In mutual embarrassment, rather than from any desire felt by either to peruse the sage allegory made so frequently the pretext of their interviews, the minstreless and her lover read, as was mentioned previously, in the "Romance of the Rose." The dry, metaphorical, scholastic account delivered in its verses of the progress of love, received indeed a marvellously illumining commentary from the mingling glances—the sighs, the smiles—the tremulous tones both of tutoress and disciple; yet, on the whole, under a quaint and tedious personification, the verses of Maître Guillaume de Lorris gave no such bad picture of a passion fretted and obstructed by obstacles, as not to be recognised by those suffering under a similar malady. Owen ceased to read—with the strange request we have commemorated—to be allowed to gaze instead!

It was the hour of sunset, and the rosy splendour of the sky shone in upon them as they sat, while the benign perfume of the lofty gardens of Jean de Troye contributed its enervating influence. Owen's heart beat wildly as a deer's in the toils—but Huéline either did not, or would not, perceive his agitation. She threw herself disdainfully back in her armchair, with the pettish exclamation recorded at the commencement of the preceding chapter. A flamy glow was on her cheek, and a troubled light gleamed from her downcast eyelashes on the tears that loaded them. Something of

wrathful shone amidst all the beauty of her countenance, like the fierce gleams of the sun through a thundercloud. In truth, her resolution was formed. She was determined, at whatever risk, to know the cause of the fears and hopes that intensely tormented her. The cataract had reached the edge of the abyss.

"Do not wearied me, dear knight, to gaze for ever on me—thus."

Owen felt this reproach to the depths of his soul. The dews on those long silky eyelashes melted his heart away in moods of remorse and tenderness. He felt, with all his inexperience, that the signs of passion to which he had so often yielded must render the silence of his lips strange—even insulting! Fortunately for him, the sweetness that shared in the anger of her tones reminded him, by some association, of the strange rhyme in his prophecy, which until then he had but vaguely considered—

> "Woo no daughter but a king's,
> Sorrow though the mermaid sings."

It almost seemed to the fantastic Celt as if he saw before him—listened to the fatal allurement of the songs of one of those syren daughters of the deep! The waves that flowed round the Sacred Isle—his father's deathbed—his solemn promises—his glorious prophecies—all rushed back in rapid sequence upon his memory, and gave him courage.

"Wouldst thou deprive me, bright Huéline, of the sole happiness that ever may be mine—to gaze on thee?" he faltered. "I know not how it is, but thy beauty brings tears to mine eyes—like the memory of the dark silver twilight of mine own land!"

"Some rosiness of early morning will be around thee soon—thou wilt forget me!—the damsels of the court are fair, and noble, and wealthy! What is Huéline to remember?" returned the minstreless.

"Fear them not—doubt not that such can make me forget thee!" returned Owen. "Ah! thou knowest not wherefore I am silent with a bursting soul—what oaths, what prophecies, trammel me!—else would I tell thee what talisman I have against any charms, wealth, or power! I have sworn to fulfil mine horoscope, if human efforts may—sworn to a dying father, dearest Huéline!—And that prophecy bids me, 'Woo no daughter but the daughter of a king!'"

"The daughter of a king!—knight, surely thou raveest?"

replied Huéline, after a pause of astonishment, but with a deep inward chill at the heart.

"Hear it then—thou art skilled in all such lore! The famed magician Glendower, who thrice compelled the thunder and hail to descend Snowdon, and do battle with our enemies, drew for me this horoscope!" said the Welsh chieftain, urged by an almost inexplicable mixture of emotion. But he recited the lines of Glendower's prophecy with the fraught enthusiasm that makes converts; or, at all events, proves the sincerity of the attempt.

Huéline listened, like one petrified, to this singular effusion, which flashed explanations upon her bewildered fancy. The remembrance of Owen's astrological researches—of his superstition—of the mysterious allusions he had not unfrequently dropped to the destinies in store for him—rushed upon her in overwhelming confusion. Yet something of the ridiculous so irresistibly joined in all the extraordinary matter of this revelation, that she could not forbear a sudden and startling laugh, that yet seemed to have an edge like jagged lightning.

"And for a madman's dream—for what else was Glendower—what else is astrology, starry science though it be?—wilt thou resign—abandon?—But it is true! You say well, knight! I am skilled in these sciences—let me peruse this horoscope!" she said, stopping the first wild outburst of her feelings almost with equal suddenness.

The demand rekindled some of the most irritating of Owen's recollections, and he was indignant at the ridicule which his magnificent pretensions excited.

"In mine own land—simple knight though I mount my charger in France—I am known to be of royal blood, more ancient than that which wears your crown!" he replied, adding, with a fierce scarlet suffusion of the cheek, "but, for mine horoscope, I lost it in the silver egg at the Vire—to an English knight, from whom I trust yet to win it back!"

Huéline was not so unacquainted with the adventure of the Deliverance of Arms as its young hero doubtless expected. The glorious associations the remembrance threw around him added stings to the shame, regret, and indignation in her heart. Altogether this inspired a keen exasperation—a fervid resolution to her purposes—which hitherto had been lacking. Her whole manner changed, with a very slight pause, to laughing gaiety and seeming carelessness.

"No damsel of France, then, under degree of a king's daughter, may hope to win your favourable regards?" she

said with a smile that concealed infinite agony. "*Noble messire!* why did you not announce it so at the beginning, *to* spare so much vain trouble? And yet, look you, the heavens glow as brightly over the lowly Boucherie as over the royal bowers of St. Poi!—or has some god by accident overturned his nectar among the clouds above us? It is well; you put me fairly on my guard—that whoso would win you must spare you the threats of your prophecy, by wooing you, not waiting to be wooed!"

"Brightest one! in what manner wouldst thou woo, *that* should not be too irresistible?" said Owen, much relieved at this reception of a communication which he hoped, and yet dreaded beyond almost any suffering, would put an end to the struggle and overwhelming temptations under whose assault he felt himself in continual danger of succumbing.

"In what manner should a minstrel woo, but in song?" replied Huéline. "And, in so good a cause, I could be tempted to forget mine old resolve—to be once more that Huéline whom Raymond of Marseilles praised—whose lays did ever win the jongleurs their suppers!"

"Yea, sweetest one! sing something gay and full of hope and in love with life! My soul darkens when I think how sad thou wert, what time thy Lament was sung, thou that art so young, so beautiful, so worshipped!" said Owen, brokenly.

"I did never belie my soul; I was sorrowful then, I am joyous now!" returned the minstreless. "But we poets are the very chameleons of change: list, how my lay rejoices too! It is in part a dream; but I would have those who sing it, call it—the Fountain of Love!—not the Dream of Huéline!"

And she touched the chords of Owen's harp which was beside her, and sang—perhaps improvising as she went, for habit and melodious intuition gave the minstreless of the Boucherie almost as much power over her less flexible language as was boasted by the Provençal troubadours over theirs. The measure she used was so various, that it formed rather a cadenced and harmonious prose than any regular rhythm. The fanciful idea embodied in the lay was in the allegorical taste of the age, but was not without originality and beauty sufficient to captivate the taste of the enamoured listener.

THE FOUNTAIN OF LOVE.

And said I, Lute! for aye be mute?
And said I, Hope, thy dirge is sung?—

'Twas so, or seemed; nor o'er me gleamed
One branch to which my spirit clung
Of all that golden tree!
And oft a form, of shadowy storm,
With lurid hand, would beckon me!—
And voices of sad melody
Chanted that Death and Peace are one;
And bade me track the dying sun
To some rich realm of crimson light
Beyond the farthest grasp of night!
All earth was cheerless, void, and dun;
Such as the wintry twilight leaves,
That lingers, and yet, lingering, grieves.
And cold and calm I deemed my breast,
A dark lake in its mountains lost,
By no soft-stirring breeze caressed,
By no wild-freshening tempest crossed:
For, like a ship on an unmoving wave,
A restless still was on me—death without the grave
Thus woeful, 'mid the bloom of spring,
I strayed—an uncongenial thing!
To me the sweet winds brought no balm,
The shadowy valleys breathed no calm,
The rose was little beautiful!
I could have wept, I knew not why,
To hear the lavish birds on high,
Trilling the woodlands full!
To mark the colours of the sky
Reflected in the violet's deep blue eye,
And feel it too must die!
So lovely—so unblest—
Seemed to me all things, that my weary soul
Sighed for some universal close,
Some deluge of forgetfulness to roll
Over creation's throes!

And thus I wandered, led by chance,
Till the deep woodland oped a zone
Of grassy emerald, far and lone,
Where moonlight fay might love to dance—
And there a Fountain rose.
Its diamond showers of watery light
Did ever keep the verdure bright,
Fed by incessant tears.
And flowers of every hue and glow—
Love's latest blush—his earliest snow—
Bloomed all above, around, below!—
And in it bathed a form divine,
A form of sculptured light—like thine—
But scarce such ripening years!
And bright wings fluttered o'er his head
In feathery rainbows that did shed

Such sweetness, all my soul grew faint!—
And with their languid tears, mine eyes
Brooded like those of summoned saint
That leaves some loved one, for the skies!—
Ah fain, ah fain I would have fled,
But the Enchanter spake, and then
I lingered like the spell-bound men
That hear the mandrake shriek, for well
  I knew that there was fate and death
  In all the nectar of his breath,
In all the heaven he promised—hell!

"Know'st thou me not?" he sung or said,
  "Thou priestess of my brightest shrine,
Where worshipped the Leucadian maid,
  Where love and glory mingling twine!—
What mean'st thou thus to muse and pine,
And waste the gorgeous light of youth
In seeking that vast lie, called Truth?
For nought is real but my rich joys!
  Honour, ambition, fame are nought!
All that man's restless hour employs
  Save my delights, are vainly bought!
For what can shadows yield of bliss?
Only what sense embraces—is!
The rest but seems—a realm of dreams!

Fear not!—why shouldst thou fear? Thy brow
Marked thee for ever mine—as now!—
In all things that are grand, and bright,
  And beautiful, and wild, and sad—
The flowers of day, the stars of night,
  The wildering thoughts that some deemed glad,
The sunset's splendour, and the might
  Of tempests when they rend the oak,—
Huéline! thou hast loved; my stroke
  But fires the nursed volcano's strength,
And thou art wholly mine at length!—
  Heed not these spectral shades that gleam
Around my ever-haunted stream!
Though Dido's breast be gored and red,
  And Cleopatra's agony
  Bends her most like a stately tree
Over her Aspic's panting head!
Neither would lose the bliss they shared
With all the woe they wrought or dared!—
A desolate height of ecstasy,
A burning ship upon the sea,
This wert thou born to be—and be!
Fear not!—the only woe of love
  Is, not to be beloved again!—
Bend to my wave and prove
  How sweet is even its pain!

Drink!"—and my trembling lips I bent
  Unto the charmed brim!
Ah, mocking Fate! what vision rose
  So bright—so like—to Him?
What burning lip met mine so sweet
The sun did ne'er his roses greet
  More fraught with living fire!
What radiance lit the magic wild,
What Eden bloomed around and smiled
  With purple glows of young desire?
What raised the universal pall,
And shone like dawning over all?
I wronged thee, Science, when I said
Thy sandy seas we vainly wade!
  As torchlight fires a sparry cave
With rainbow lightnings, snaky splendours,
  Of all the hues the heavens e'er gave,
So, Love, thy bursting radiance renders
  Those gathered treasures of the soul!
  And back did all the full tide roll
  Of my youth's frenzy—and this lay
  Rushed forth—as torrents to the day!

I love, I love!—what spell of fear
  For nature's child hath nature's voice?
And I will speak—let all earth hear,
  And in my joy rejoice!
Away, away, ye antique tales,
  Ye dismal bars that rise between!
Let toothless Custom make her wails
  In prison walls herself hath built!
Free as the birds that love for love,
  And nothing more, our love shall be—
As Innocence first loved, for Guilt
  Invented first—security!

Let rules bind serving souls; but we
Have Nature's heritage—are free!
A poet's burning soul is mine,
Shall wreathe, shall mingle, melt in thine!
Cost what it will of weal or woe,
Let us life's wildest triumph know!
Raise to our lips the flamy draught
Made the gods deathless as they quaffed!
Though the last drop, by mortal breath
So madly drained, be ruin and death!
Thrice blest to perish thus—thrice blest,
When tasted is life's richest zest,
On its full wave to rush to rest!"

The effect of this lay upon the excited passions of Owen Tudor was little short of frenzy. Unfortunately, with other associations recalled to him by the image of the syren, with

which he now almost identified Huéline, came to his memory some good advice bestowed on him by the monk of Llanvaes at parting. The learned preceptor seemed, from his earlier recollections, to entertain a great dread of the Parisian women, whom he represented under very disadvantageous colours, tinctured, no doubt, by the gloom of the cloister, but not undeserved, in that age of licence. Owen applied these warnings to Huéline de Troye, but in a way his instructor certainly never intended! If she were of that light, variable, unrestrained race, wherefore should he alone refuse to taste the rare, though fugitive, delights offered by their love? As well refuse to smell the sweetness of a rose, because its perfume was also diffused in the general air.

And now even the warning contained in his prophecy lost its terrors: the ungenerous but overpowering thought took possession of Owen's soul, that he was wooed, not wooing! He spoke—and he spoke madness—the contagious madness of passion. Huéline's object was doubtless only to wring a confirmation of words—an anchorage for her heart, in its sea of hopes and fears. And never did youthful lover pour forth a more impassioned confession than that which rushed—like a freed torrent, indeed—to the lips of Owen Tudor! Yet the long-expected and panted-for assurance, under such circumstances, might well provoke the indignation that suddenly flamed in the splendid eyes of the minstreless.

"False knight! it was for this I sang, for this I wooed!—that I might learn thy full perfidy, and hate thee for it!" she exclaimed. "Dost thou deem, then, that Huéline de Troye may be loved as a paramour, and not as a wife? Is this thy knightly faith, thy knightly honour!—the reward of the love which I do and will not conceal I cherish for thee—and must for ever?"

The light in which this reproach placed Owen Tudor struck his own sense as so horrible, that he hastened, we know not with what frantic eloquence, to dispel it. What excuses—what arguments—what oaths he used—it were vain to repeat. But the remorse, and even superstitious terror, with which the bare thought of such perfidy filled Owen's breast, glanced a delusive, a fatal inspiration into the heart of Huéline. There was despair in it too!—all the most bewildering passions of humanity at work in a nature that concentrated its strongest and most fiery essences! Owen avowed that, as his only hope to escape from the dangerous intoxication which possessed him—as his only hope to preserve an eternal love

in purity—without violating his father's dying commands, and abandoning the hope of the redemption of his country—(he spoke no longer of the magnificent promises of his horoscope)—it was necessary to depart from the Boucherie—to leave the presence of Huéline for ever! At whatever risk, he would leave it—would hasten to the Grand Châtelet. This revelation was also an eternal adieu—to be sealed with the first, the last kiss—that ever he might dare to place on her *lips*!

Huéline shuddered when her lover gently glided his arm round her, as if a serpent had wreathed her; but, overwhelmed as she was with resplendent blushes, she raised her eyes that glowed fathomless as light, full on his—and all was lost!

The fiend of passion himself, that prompted, wept over their crime—so noble was the structure he found—so utter the ruin he made!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CALL OF DESTINY.

"THREE strokes of the clock of Notre Dame!—within one little hour the destiny of a whole life!—all gained or all lost—within an hour!" mused the minstreless of the Boucherie, as she seated herself in the chamber of the terrace garden, awaiting Owen's entry from his usual noonday exercise with his horse and arms in the yards of the Boucherie.

Books lay open around her, and she seemed to be lost in one of those minstrel meditations that the Caboches were wont to marvel at. But certes those were not altogether the colours of science that came and went like the undulations of flame in her complexion with the variations of the revery in which she continued plunged. Various, indeed!—for the emotions of hell and paradise, all that is dreadful in remorse, in shame, in fear—all that is delicious in triumph, pleasure, and hope—wandered intertwistedly in her soul like vipers in a bed of the rarest flowers.

Remorse!—for it was now the terrible calm of the passions, when they present themselves without their ornaments, angels of brightness changed into accusing fiends! And the towers of the Châtelet were in sight—the very symbol of the barbarous feudality she hated, the living grave of her sire, the stronghold of the Armagnac sway!—Shame! with what agony, however associated with frenzied happiness, did she

retrace the events of the last few weeks! A soul so keenly alive in its sensibilities could not but feel to its depths the disgrace and dishonour which, as a woman, she had incurred by her fall. Huéline felt she had debased in the dust all the noble aspirations of her existence; that she had justified the contempt entertained by nobles and knights for the virtue of women of the inferior classes. Fear!—what did she not fear? With a passion heightened almost to madness, she now knew in her secret soul, or she dreaded it in her woman's heart, that she had lost her strongest hold on her lover—the imaginative idolatry of respect she had inspired. Of late the conviction forced itself upon her that, in the uncomplex ideas of the young mountaineer, she must appear in the light of an empassioned paramour, familiar with the artifices of sensual love! The unhappy minstreless obeyed but too eagerly the suggestions of her glowing fancy in multiplying the fascinations destined to make her lover forget she had lost the only permanently attractive one in woman—purity!

This thought mingled its poison throughout her revery, and breathed in the desponding melancholy of the words she uttered, after a pause. "He delays!—he was not wont to keep me waiting thus!" she murmured. "And his kiss at parting, methought, was cold as melting snow! Yet, though destruction dreg the draft, it is of nectar! Let the worst come, Owen, I am for ever a part of thee, of thy heart, of thy memory—for who forgets his first love wholly? Ay! happen what will, the freshest blossoms of thy heart and youth are mine! Of this joy, of this triumph, the leagued universe cannot deprive me!"

Yes, the most gorgeous and richly scented hues of triumph, pleasure, and hope glowed amidst all those stinging recollections, as we have said. Triumph and pleasure!—guilty, troubled, tempestuous—but still both, in an excess which to natures less powerfully and passionately organized would seem either impossible or destructive to existence itself. And for hope!—it was not difficult for so ardent and poetical an imagination to blossom all over with it, when warmed by so pervading an enthusiasm kindled into activity. Had she not won from him oaths which it would shake the heavens to violate—oaths of love and fidelity to the grave? Had he not sworn, the Love uniting them should be a priest mightier to bind faith than any the hands of man could consecrate? What though these pledges were poured in the delirium of a magic spell?—what though they were the ravings of passion excited

to frenzy by artifices she crimsoned to remember? His chivalrous honour—his inexperience—even the remorse that tormented him—assured her of their power. And would not the completeness of the sacrifice she had made, the absolute manner in which she had thrown herself on the tenderness of his young heart, plead for her eternally? Whatever she had lost of her spell, had she gained nothing? Might not the associations of pleasure well replace those of the cold homage and admiration he once possessed? Poor Huéline! —she imagined she had it yet in her power to retrieve all—to accomplish all the objects of her existence—redeem her father and her own honour—and become the wife of a popular hero in the person of a worshipped lover!

The departure of the Armagnac army was a thing decided. The dauphin was to take the command on an appointed day; and Owen received a summons to be in readiness, at the gates of the Boucherie, to join Sir Taneguy's squadrons on their march. Greatly to Huéline's surprise and alarm, he had eagerly signified his consent, and even impatience for the departure. Meanwhile the Burgundians of Paris matured the plan of a revolt, to burst into activity as soon as the main force of their enemies was sufficiently removed. The turn-coat governor of Poutoise was secretly assembling a body of troops, with which to present himself suddenly before the capital; and, aided by the surprise, and an insurrection within the walls, he hoped to make his way into them in triumph.

It was necessary to keep Owen from sharing in the Norman expedition, or it is probable that Huéline would have allowed the conspiracy to develop itself in such a manner as to give him an excuse, in the rush of circumstances, for the part she intended him to play. But that was impossible! De Giac, indeed, urged the prudence of making no further effort to gain him over, without, of course, dreaming of Huéline's purposes, or of the ruinous confidence she meditated. Simon Caboche and his son were also opposed to any more attempts. The continual praises dropped by De Giac of their young guest's beauty, and of the generous trust they placed in their betrothed, produced a strong effect on both. Yet Simon had a kind of rough liking for the young knight that induced him to yield to Huéline's persuasions, and consent to her making a renewed and last effort to detain him. It was to be attempted on this memorable day of the soliloquy.

Huéline waited long for her lover's step,—much longer than she had anticipated. She grew restless and vaguely discon-

tented, she scarcely knew why. What was the consequence of a few minutes, more or less, seemingly?—At last he came, but not with the impatience and bounding step of yore. He was in his armour, pale and exhausted with the unwearied exercise in the use of the arms of civilized chivalry to which of late he had devoted himself.

With all her sagacity, Huéline but partly fathomed the emotions that worked in her lover's breast from the fatal moment when an almost irresistible fascination overcame his generous sense of honour and integrity. Yet the forebodings of the human heart are seldom unfounded, least of all those of a woman who loves! The moon herself scarcely lost more in opinion, when she descended on Latmos to the arms of a mortal, than Huéline in those of her Welsh lover. His impetuous nature whirled him rapidly into any vortex of passion he approached, but the reflux left him to the sway of habitual influences, the force of which even Huéline's fears had not estimated. With the ideal grandeur and purity of her character vanished much of its enthralling spell over the son of the Druidic Arvon. He was too unmetaphysical and unsophisticated to sound the depths of the profound and gulfy abyss which the heart of Huéline de Troye inclosed. Fresh from the simplicity of his wild mountains, how could he fathom the complicated emotions that raged in the bosom of this daughter of cities, of science, and overwrought feeling?

But when the delirium of passion was passed—when reason and reflection returned with their unwelcome lights—remorse and repentance scarcely ever visited even female innocence betrayed so acutely as they wrung the heart of Owen Tudor. He could not, indeed, resist the power of the spell which this Circe of passion continued to throw over him; but a devouring dissatisfaction and melancholy took possession of his inmost soul. The gratitude, the joy, the triumph such an adventure was likely to infuse, dictated, indeed, the fervent oaths wherewith he bound himself for ever hers. But if the idea of uniting his destinies by marriage to the daughter of a rebel apothecary had formerly appeared to the son of Arthur so impossible a submission, it may be imagined he did not now entertain it. Huéline herself spoke not of such a contingency—she gave all to love, and demanded only love in return. It seemed even a dreary satisfaction to the generosity of her nature—to its pride—to owe nothing to compassion, nothing to restraint. She disdained the common resources of her sex too much even to pretend any right of reproaching

her lover with their mutual fault. Nay, she assumed the office that in the code of guilty love should have been Owen's, and smiled and argued away with that golden sophistry of her eloquence the pangs of conscience and honour that tormented him. Perhaps in anticipation of the suspicions she knew her conduct was calculated to provoke, or in excess of self-condemnation, or in the defiance and pride of her nature, she even wronged herself by declaring that he had fallen like a victim into a snare she had laid for him. This was unjust to *herself*: her temptation, and its fatal success, were the inspiration of a maddening moment—of despair. But the avenging angel, whose office it is to punish the crimes of men by their consequences, took note of her words! Even the exaggerations of her remorse and feeling wrought against her. Her betrayal of the generous Caboches, the dishonour of her father's blood even in his dungeon, her abandonment of his democratic principles, the loss of innocence, of honour, of all that elevates humanity, she herself represented in the most flagrant colours that the eloquence of genius could lend despair! And Owen's own exalted notions of female honour and purity arrayed themselves against her, almost while with his own lips he pleaded into frenzy the feelings that impelled the unhappy minstreless into forgetfulness of their restraints.

These sentiments were alone as sufficient to trouble his happiness as it might one swallowing a draught of the richest wine, to know that there was poison in it, irresistibly sweet though the quaffs might be! At times he seemed to start from an enchanted dream, and yet strove to believe he was still in one, when he felt the stings of the recollections and remorse that roused themselves in his soul, and hoped that he might again awake, the Owen Tudor he had been! His prophecy frequently recurred to him, but no longer in alluring splendours, but with the threatening and fearful glare of the inscription on the wall! The conviction gained every hour force upon his secret heart that Huéline was indeed the syren of whose song he was to beware, who was to foil the illustrious promise of his horoscope—his sworn vengeance against England—all that the yearning love of his native land might prompt! The superstitious mountaineer even imagined there was something of magic fascination in the influence Huéline's presence never failed to restore to her, over him and his destinies. The desire to be rid of these tormenting thoughts, to feel that he had regained power over his fate—above all, to free himself from the suffering his betrayal of the Cabochi-

hospitality inflicted on him, were Owen's strongest sentiments in the eagerness with which he accepted Taneguy Duchâtel's summons. He formed the hope and the resolve either to perish or to distinguish himself in the war, so as to open some way to fulfil his promises to his departed sire and vanquished land. The hope reanimated him, and he was consoled by being unable to discern in what manner Huéline was to thwart the accomplishment at least of his patriotic plans. She encouraged his warlike toils, procured him the aid of persons well skilled in the French manner of wielding arms, and seemed to take pride and glory only in the prospect of his achievement, of his renown!

Under these circumstances the lovers met. Owen was not altogether in a mood unsuited to Huéline's purposes. The prospect of parting with her rekindled his tenderness in much of its earliest glow, and it appeared in the alarm and anger of his manner when she repulsed his caresses with a species of pettish disdain. Even the warmth and reiteration with which he vowed that he would return to lay the laurels he might win in the campaign at her feet, revealed the fact. This furnished Huéline with an opportunity to commence her revelation; and throwing herself into his arms, with suffocating sobs and tears that nigh vanquished him, to begin with, she besought him not to leave her, to stay in Paris and achieve a glory and recompenses infinitely surpassing any he could hope for in the Armagnac service!

For awhile broken words, and sighs, and bewildering kisses continued the revelation; but it needed not Huéline's bright intelligence to perceive that the decisive moment was arrived. And if eloquence could have won a cause, if the most potent arguments of love, ambition, and even fear had not been combated in Owen's breast by rooted principles of his nature, Huéline must have triumphed. She felt that her all was thrown upon the die, and she was resolved to win it. But in vain!

"Ah, dearest Owen!" she exclaimed, wreathing him as if inextricably in her arms. "Do not leave me to despair, to remorse, to the hell of mine own heart! If thy blood be kingly, if thy destiny be to such glorious heights, it needs not a royal mother to make thy children the descendants of kings! Wed me; let me live to call thee my children's father without a blush! Thou hast sworn to love me for ever before heaven—what doth it matter if thou doth so, too, before man? Wed me—redeem thy land, and let me share

in the glorious toil! I can give thee claims to the gratitude of France—at least, of John of Burgundy—which shall amply suffice to win thee the aid thou lackest—for he is liberal as the winds that scatter all they possess!—I hazard nothing in confiding it to thee—thou art myself, my better nobler self!—Know, then, that the people of this great city—that perhaps appears to thee so broken to the yoke—await but the departure of the Armagnacs against Henry of England to rise in arms, and restore Paris to Duke John! This is sworn, promised, concerted! All is ready—but we need a leader of dazzling qualities, to win the popular eye! Consent to become it—to become the master of Paris, and so of France! The people are generous and forgiving as women—even besotted in their dotage to those of noble blood—they are but few—who have pity on their sufferings, or but feign it! Already they love thee, know thy generosity, thy valour, thine audacity!—Wed me to-night, and to-morrow the Boucherie shall acknowledge thee as its chief and leader, despite all envy or contrary pretence!—A Capuchin friar, at my summons, awaits us secretly in the church of St. Jacques—dost thou consent?—Are we one for ever?"

The eloquence of the syren voice, the beauty of those impassioned eyes, that poured their purple-hued effulgence into Owen Tudor's—all were neutralized by the recollections which thronged upon him at the bare mention of the name of Henry of England. The treachery to the party he had espoused—its menaced ruin—the advantages which must accrue to the English—the little probability that John of Burgundy would desert their alliance—rushed overwhelmingly upon him! His astonishment heightened into a feeling nigh akin to horror—and even an expression of fear passed over his face, as if indeed he gazed on the terrible beauty of the sea-sorceress, enchanting some voyager beneath the waves.

We will not repeat the words of Owen Tudor's wrathful refusal. The imminence and certainty of the peril—the gulf of disappointment into which he fell from his rising hopes—might excuse the rash and violent terms he used, to a calm spectator—but not to Huéline de Troye. Words which maddened her burst from his lips—words that destroyed her last hope of redemption and retrieval!

"And wed thee!—wed *thee!*—But, indeed, thou hast devised a goodly means to make me worthy of wedding dishonour! A false deserter—a recreant knight—were a fitt

[illegible]

claimed. "Thou art poor, but honest, Pierre, and I call thee to witness that I give him but a few brief minutes to leave the Boucherie for ever!—Let the scholars rend him if they meet him on his way—we will give the Armagnacs no pretext to enter the Boucherie!—let him depart in peace! And, to prove we have no secrets that we dread he might divulge to the Armagnacs, I will give him what shall be his passport to their favour and presence, for true it is, dishonoured knight, this poor beggar, whom thou wouldst have destroyed, found, and honestly delivered to my custody, the attestation of the English heralds to thy mad feats on the Vire!"

The mendicant made a slight, fierce gesture, which he suddenly restrained; and Huéline, opening a casket of rare inlaid brass-work at which Owen had often unsuspiciously gazed, produced the parchment indited by Paon and the King of Scots. There was unutterable anguish in the look with which she handed it to him, but the severity of her words was unabated. Amidst all his trouble and indignation, Owen was amazed at the perfection of what might certainly be called her acting in the part of the woman of the keenest sensibility and honour, outraged by such a proposition as that imputed to him! What a marvellous compound is man!—at the moment when his cage-door was opened to him, he hesitated to spread his wings! But for the entreaty in Huéline's eyes, that seemed to implore him to have mercy on them both, he might possibly have refused to embrace the opportunity of retreat and evasion she offered him.

"Go; go instantly!—and return not till I recall you, false knight!" she exclaimed, with so wonderful a power of intonation that Owen felt there was as much tenderness and relenting as wrath in her heart. "Go!—within half an hour old Pierre shall learn if you yet linger!—within half an hour the Caboches shall know what recompense you projected to yield their hospitality!"

Within half an hour Owen Tudor was on his way to the Grand Châtelet—to the presence of its fierce Provost. In what mood he hastened down to the yards of the Boucherie, where he had left Rhys and his ready caparisoned charger, may be perhaps imagined, but not analysed—so confused and heterogeneous was the ferment. Luckily the son of Goronwy had not yet concluded his task of unharnessing his master's steed. He had apparently been otherwise engaged, perhaps as he himself rather hesitatingly explained, in mending the ring of the damsel Caboche's great bunch of keys.

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It pleased the Chevalier Sauvage to announce only that, having discovered his lost diploma of the Vire, he had determined to go to the Châtelet, and deliver it in person to the Provost of Paris. Rhys did not imagine for a moment but that they were to return, yet he looked rather blank at the summons; and it was not until some obvious signs of his lord's impatience appeared that he performed his functions with the requisite alacrity. He had no steed on which to accompany his master, and seemed to expect that he was to remain behind; but this Owen would not permit. The young knight could not fathom the reluctance of his usually zealous servitor to follow him until they were in motion to leave the yards of the Boucherie, cavalry and infantry abreast. But a florid female visage, ruddy all over with blushes, appeared in astonishment at one of the innumerable little casements overlooking it. And then Owen perceived, by the extreme joy and similar colouring up of his vassal's visage, that his love was returned, and—innocent.

The Chevalier Sauvage was not altogether unfortunate in timing the hour of his departure from the Boucherie. He arrived at the Grand Châtelet almost at the very moment when Sir Taneguy, surrounded by his usual armed retinue, was mounting his horse to attend a council of his party at the palace, or, as it was more commonly called, the King's Hostel of St. Pol.

The Provost was greatly and very visibly surprised at the apparition of his warlike protégé; but he was satisfied and even pleased with a somewhat faltering explanation, regarding the recovery of the diploma of arms, its achiever's weariness of the Boucherie, and resolve to defy the malice of his scholastic enemies by quitting its walls.

"Thou art welcome, and the rather that thy coming refutes La Trimouille's lies, who swore thou hadst turned purple in the shambles, and wouldst not with us to Normandy!" he said. "For my part, I thought thou wert making merry with yonder handsome glee-maiden—and I hoped she might tell thee some of their secrets!—What are the news among the Burgundians? For, since thou has left the game of thine own accord, no doubt thou art weary of it! How like they our Norman expedition?"

Owen coloured deeply as he replied, evasively—confused at the idea of the danger which his silence or his speech must cause to one party or another—but unwilling to say aught that might compromise Huéline. "I am no espial, messire!

Nor are the women of the Boucherie likely to babble to an Armagnac guest, for methinks they are fiercer Burgundians than the men!"

By this time Sir Taneguy had opened the parchment handed to him by Owen. He read it at first to himself with evident marks of surprise, and then aloud to his martial attendants. The illustrious signature to the document, and the splendid essay in arms it attested, excited general admiration.

"Shall not this be a noble knight, sirs, when he is of full force, and smiled on by some noble dame?" exclaimed the Provost, rejoicingly. "And, now I look on thee by this glorious light, I see well that thou shalt do the realm of France a noble service! Thou hast a face and form to win favour—and hast no cause to love the Dauphin's besotter, La Trimouille!—Come with me to the Hostel of St. Pol—I will instantly present thee to my lord the Dauphin!—He will love thee, and he is ever governed by those nearest to him, whether for good or ill! And thou wilt tell him that his sceptre must be a sword if ever he would inherit one!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HOSTEL OF ST. POL.

At the period of our chronicle, the kings of France possessed three royal residences in their capital, which, as was very necessary, were also fortresses. The Palace of the City—the Louvre—and the Hostel of St. Pol—were their designations. From the time of Charles the Wise, who displayed much of his wisdom in the accommodation he provided for himself and his descendants, the last was in general the reigning sovereign's abode. Its vast extent furnished the lodgment necessary for a feudal court, which mostly included a little army; and its vicinity to the strong fortress of the Bastille gave it security. Its walls bordered the Seine on one side, and stretched to the Rue St. Antoine on the north, thus including within its royal precincts all that district that has since proved the hornet's nest of democracy.

Within this circuit, whatever was deemed necessary in that age for the maintenance of royal state and pleasure was amply provided. The numerous clusters of separate buildings gave accommodation to the various courts and royalties dependent

on the main one,—those of the Dauphin and of the great officers of the crown. Chapels, gardens, orchards, mews, courts, so spacious that magnificent tournaments were held in them, a menagerie of wild beasts, places in which every species of animal could be reared and fattened—ponds, aviaries, and a park—were all included in its extensive area.

To this right royal residence Owen Tudor accompanied the stern Provost of Paris. The distance was not great; and in a brief space, entering its fortified enclosure, the numerous towers and piles of the scattered palace were visible among the woodland and gardens that diversified its extensive park. Directing their way to the largest of these unconnected masses, which was hung all over in the most singular manner with smaller piles of masonry—round, square, and conical towers, formed like incrustations—they arrived in the courtyard of the Hôtel of St. Maur, where the Dauphin kept his court. They found it crowded with falconers, horsemen, dogs, and other attendants on a hunting party, in various liveries, but the majority wearing the silver lilies of France on their breasts, surmounted by the Dauphin's fishy emblem.

The glance of Taneguy fell with little satisfaction on these preparations, and he inquired what was doing, with evident vexation. The master of the falconers replied with a degree of supercilious triumph, tempered by fear, that his highness the Dauphin had wagered on the flight of his favourite tercel against one recently procured from Barbary by the Lord de la Trimouille, and that they were going forth to decide the contest.

"What, abroad to measure the flight of a hawk when the council meets to debate how they may keep him standing room in France!" muttered Sir Taneguy; and as he spoke a flourish of clarions and the appearance of a troop of brilliant young courtiers, attired in all the fopperies of the time, announced the Dauphin's approach. He came on horseback amidst them—a youth about eighteen years old, handsomely shaped, save that his legs were a little too short, of a florid fair complexion, with mild and somewhat melancholy blue eyes, and a cast of physiognomy that declared the natural indolence and voluptuous easiness of his disposition. La Trimouille rode beside him—diverting him with effusions of that licentious and malignant pleasantry in which he excelled. The misfortunes of his earliest years, and a constitutional languor of thought, made this piquant species of gaiety pleasing to the young prince.

This diversion received a sudden check when the Provost was recognised, whose sorrowful and gloomy look sufficiently announced his thoughts.

"Sir Taneguy!" exclaimed the pert favourite as the Provost alighted heavily from his charger to salute the prince, "do ye note what a hard shock this land of France gives to men who fall? But you come in good time, and perhaps on information, to aid us in deciding on the merits of my hawk Huéline, which I am willing to wager against any bird, of whatever wing, and against which his highness ——"

"I am come on no such fool's errand, Sire de la Trimouille!" returned Taneguy, "but to escort his highness to the council, if he would know with any certainty in what manner this realm of France is lost!"

"What needs his highness's presence to cry Amen as often as my lord the constable wags his white beard?" said La Trimouille. "It is enough for us we are to go where we are sent—whether to Normandy or elsewhere!"

"What is there of new, Taneguy? We trust there are no worse tidings than yesterday brought us?" said the Dauphin, scarcely able to suppress a laugh as he gave his hand to the kneeling Provost.

"And what would your highness have worse, unless the red cross waved on the walls of Paris?" returned Sir Taneguy. "Cherbourg has fallen, and King Henry needs only Rouen to win back all that his ancestors lost to yours in Normandy!"

"The men of Rouen are of stout build, and so are their walls—and there are plenty of rats to eat when other provisions fall short!" returned La Trimouille, smilingly. "And, let come the worst, we have six months good yet ere we need wear so doomsday a look as that you come to affright us withal, Lord Provost,—and we only need this fair morning to see my hawk Huéline fly!"

"Praters will lose a realm as soon as traitors!" said Taneguy. "I pray you, my lord Sir Charles, if ever I have deserved well of your hands, go with me to the council—if it be but to tell the constable you will not have this knight—whom I humbly present to you—molested!"

"Is this the Chevalier Sauvage, Sir Taneguy?" said the Dauphin, with evident interest.

"Needs your highness ask that and look at this garniture? How left you the bright brown witch of the Boucherie?" said La Trimouille, with a smiling familia-

as if he had always been pleasantly acquainted with Owen Tudor. "You too shall see how my hawk flies!—I call her Huéline, because she is of so high a soar—and because *I* only know the lure to which she will stoop!"

"Let her fly as she will, I could teach you to cleave air more swiftly still, Lord de la Trimouille!" returned Owen, with extreme fierceness. The courtier only laughed.

"The Chevalier Sauvage is your knight, sir, and his safety touches your dignity!" interrupted Taneguy. "Therefore come to the council, I beseech you!—which, moreover, lacks half its weight and sway, unhonoured by your presence!"

"You can always put the crown on a cushion in my lord the Dauphin's place!" said La Trimouille.

"Nevertheless, Taneguy, I will go with you to the council," said the Dauphin, somewhat offended at this jest, and pleased with the stately beauty and spirit of the Chevalier Sauvage. I will call this knight mine before the council—that all men may know he who harms him harms ourself!"

La Trimouille's vexation was completed by this arrangement; but the Provost left him no time to dispute it, by instantly directing the march of the whole cavalcade towards the Hôtel of Sens, inhabited by the king. The jealous favourite's anger was crowned by the Dauphin commanding Owen to ride abreast with him, and amusing himself during the whole transit with his replies to questions on his adventures in France. Moreover, Taneguy produced the record of the deliverance of arms, and the prince and youthful chivalry present could not sufficiently admire an esquire who had withstood the stroke of Talbot.

Thus discoursing, the train arrived at the Hôtel of Sens, where they learned that the king was already at council, in the Hall of Theseus. The great audience-chamber of the palace was thus designated from its walls being hung with a tapestry representing the exploits of a hero of chivalrous romance who usurped the renown of the Grecian demigod.

Entering the Hall of Theseus in the train of the Dauphin, Owen perceived that the principal persons of the Armagnac council were already assembled, including the Constable d'Armagnac, the Chancellor Henri de Marle, several ecclesiastical dignitaries, and numerous lords and knights of the party. They sat on benches of dark oak, so as to form a kind of square before a table at which was a remarkable group.

The king was of course the principal personage of it, ostensibly presiding over the council, but certainly paying no great

attention to the subject of the debate. He seemed plunged in some dismal meditation, taking no notice of anybody or of anything, and yet holding in his hand the implements of an oriental game that Owen had never before seen played. Small oblong squares of parchment, beautifully emblazoned to represent kings, queens, and peers, and with black and red trefoils, spear-heads, hearts, and diamonds, were in the hands of the players. Of these there seemed to be two, beside the king. At all events, they held several pieces of similar parchment, and seemed watching with silent attention until he should recover from his revery and resume it. One of them, who stood, from his rich motley garb, was apparently the royal jester. The other, who sat, was an exquisitely beautiful girl, in the earliest blossom of youth, yet whose figure already undulated into the loveliest outlines of womanhood. Fair as the lily emblem of her royal race, its light and voluptuous blood coloured her whole complexion, deepening in the cheeks and lips to the richest rose. But for something of haughtiness that pouted in her lips, the disdainful sparkle in her eyes, and her manner of severe restraint, she might have passed for the Hebe of the gods! She wore a fillet of pearls twisted amongst her long golden hair, and a close-fitting robe of sky-faint satin that revealed her neck and bosom, if not so broadly, at least more deeply, than the generosity of modern beauty has yet conceded. Gems, hung as thickly as dew-drops on the rose, completed the garb of Madame Catherine, youngest and only unwedded daughter of France.

The constraint of the princess's demeanour seemed scarcely natural to her, and might perhaps be accounted for in the circumstance that a species of duenna stood behind her chair in the shape of a lady of honour, as stiff and starched in her robe of gold embroidery as if dressed in gilded pasteboard. The severe etiquette of the French court, and of the cramping education in which all the children of the despotic Isabeau were reared, contributed no doubt to the effect.

"Heed not this, Sir Chevalier Sauvage!—the king is subject to these reveries—or at what gaze ye?" whispered Taneguy, as the Dauphin vainly attempted to win his sire's notice by kneeling and kissing the hem of his long robe. Owen did not heed it; he was otherwise absorbed.

The madness of Charles VI. is said to have been originally caused by the united action of fear and anger on a temperament naturally gloomy and stirred by vehement passion. Fits of the blackest melancholy, varied by eruptions of homicidal fury, were its characteristics; and every interv

sanity that restored him to the consciousness of the misfortunes of his family—his slaughtered brother, his dead children, his faithless wife, his rebellious subjects—deepened the horror of his relapses.

From one of those sombre meditations, in which madness endeavours in vain to recover clear recollections of the past, the king now suddenly started. "What is the matter?" he said, staring vacantly around him. "Do we wait for torches in the broad daylight? Constable, what wait you for? We cannot unfurl the Oriflamme against our enemies merely, unless they are also the enemies of Christ! The banner of France may suffice to scatter these Flemish knaves!"

"Remind you, my liege! Alas, I am not so good a soldier as he was to whom you speak!" replied the constable, soothingly.

"True, De Clisson is dead—I think they murdered him in Bretagne?" continued the unhappy prince.

"No, my redoubted lord! he died in his bed," said Taneguy Duchâtel, very eagerly.

"Wherefore were we then that hot day in Bretagne? Was it not to pursue his murderers? Why do we hate even the Breton twang on thy tongue, Duchâtel?" said Charles, resting his cards on the table with puckered brows. It was on an expedition, undertaken to punish the Duke of Bretagne for an attempt to murder his favourite general, that the king was seized with his first fit of madness.

"Think not of that, sire!—it is too long ago," said the constable.

"And so it is! We were nobly attended that day we fought with Philip of Arteveldt, at Rosebecque; but so shall we never be again!" said Charles, with a deep sigh. "We are sadly fallen—to be a king!—worse far than he who usurped the wreath of Flanders. They showed him to us, 'tis true, lying all mud and gore like a mangled dog in a ditch; but he was only a brewer's son. We have been a king!"

"You shall be better served than ever, my liege," said Sir Taneguy. "Look here, how fair a knight has come from Wales to join the banner of your royal lieutenant and son, the Dauphin."

He beckoned Owen to approach, who started guiltily from the gaze of admiration he had unconsciously fixed on the fair daughter of the lilies. The princess at the same instant raised her eyes, which were cast listlessly on her cards, and encountered those of Owen. An electric shock could scarcely

have produced a more visible effect! Lovely as she was, it was very possible the first time that ever the eyes of a man had dared to express admiration of charms so illustrious. Owen was too uncivilized to be aware of the etiquette on such a point, and had but just left a glowing school where poesy and romance levelled earth and sky into one range of paradise! But, although the princess lowered her eyelashes with an expression of disdain and surprise, they were not unfrequently raised again to contemplate by stealth the beautiful person of the audacious gazer.

This became almost a licensed satisfaction, when Owen, advancing with the modesty and even confusion natural to his uncourtly breeding, presented himself full in view, and excited the general attention and wonder. The men noticed only his wild armour and singular array; the women, the symmetry of the noble person that bore its weight so unblenchingly! But the king himself stared at Owen with wild and projecting eyes, full of anxiety and alarm, as he came forward. He continued to watch him with prying attention while Taneguy introduced him with an eulogium heightened in friendly warmth by the circumstance that La Trimouille was listening with a bitter and satirical smile. This forced complacency grew almost hideous when he perceived the brilliancy with which the Chevalier Sauvage suddenly became invested in the rehearsal of his achievement against the English cavalry.

But, whether even the frank and noble beauty of the young knight's countenance failed to remove his mistrust of strangers, or for some other secret reason of madness, the king continued in his moody silence. When he spoke at last, it was very slowly and gloomily. "Our memory is not so good as it was," he said; "yet we think we have seen this youth ere now? Ah, is he not the poor scholar that pleaded for the commonalty when we held our bed of justice to punish the Parisians, forty years ago?"

"Nay, sire; it is the knight who took part with that prating madwoman in your presence, a few weeks only agone!" said La Trimouille.

"Madwoman! Do not jest with us, sir, you are not our licensed fool!" replied the king, sharply. "It was a man of a rare and winning eloquence, or an angel disguised to tell us truths, for well we know how ye maltreat our poor people! And only a few weeks agone? Why, we were then no taller than our uncle of Burgundy's sword, and we might now ' his lance!"

The Constable d'Armagnac, who had hitherto looked on with evident surprise, spoke at this moment, and in a tone of great vexation. "So then, Sir Taneguy, we are to have the stinging gnats of the University again buzzing about our ears?"

"My lord, your Norman expedition is of a kind to need all the strength and valour we can muster; and peruse this parchment!" said Sir Taneguy, handing the heraldic document.

"In truth we need heavenly aid against England!" muttered the king, gazing so fixedly at Owen that he was greatly embarrassed. "It must be so! Forty years ago, and grown no older—not a day? I pray you tell me, most learned young theologian, is it lawful to play at this game?"

The constable raised his eyes from the document he was perusing with evident interest, and made a signal to Owen, who took it with a quickness and dexterity that greatly pleased him, and replied to the king in the affirmative.

"Then sit and play with us—bring him a stool; I am glad of it, for I love the game right well!" said Charles.

This invitation greatly confused Owen Tudor. "My gracious lord," he said, with timidity, "I know not how to play: I am but lately from a far and wild land where such games are unknown."

"I wot well; they do not play at cards in heaven!" said Charles, laughing strangely. "But you are on earth now! Sit down, I tell you! Our daughter, Madame Catherine, is kind and courteous—and so should angels be—and if thou art Michael himself, thou art no higher in heaven than our daughter is on earth! She will teach thee how to play with us, and perchance to vanquish us, for they are all against us now—all, all, all!"

"Sit, knight! and in the presence of my lord the Dauphin and regent we will continue our debate!" said the constable, with a significant glance that seemed to say, "Keep him quiet! we need only his outward sanction!"

Thus commanded and encouraged, Owen could not delay obedience; but he approached with so much agitation that even Madame Catherine, who looked with an expression of disdain at the unseemly office imposed on her, relented. Something like a blush, not unmingled with a smile, lighted her fair face, as she waved her hand courteously at the velvet tabouret brought by a page, as if in assent to her unhappy sire's caprice.

"Touch your knee to the rushes, and take it!" whispered

Sir Taneguy, and Owen mechanically complied. He himself could not but remember, and contrast with some sentiment of shame, the difference of the homage he now paid, to that which he yielded to Huéline, when she disarmed him in the Boucherie. That was a natural and spontaneous tribute; for what but inborn superiorities had the minstreless to boast? And this!—it almost seemed to Owen as if he paid it partly to the magnificent cushion of cramoisy, embroidered with a crown, on which he took his place. Yet a flush of high triumph and exultation coloured his brow, for he felt that the envious eyes of La Trimouille were upon him, and that he was almost close beside the princess. Some observers noted that Madame Catherine's colour also deepened, and her eyes certainly shone with a softer and less royal lustre, perhaps with something of the coquetry natural to a young French girl, whether royal or plebeian, or even to a girl of any country, who for the first time beholds so complete a model of manly beauty as the person of Owen Tudor presented in those blooming years of his youth.

The courtiers gathered themselves around in silent groups, while the Armagnac councillors resumed their deliberations, with all the sanction that could be given by the presence of the king and Dauphin, though even the latter was a good deal more attentive to the chances of the game than to those of his realm discussed around him.

The deliberation was concerning the fall of Cherbourg, and the formation of the siege of Rouen by the English. Owen was at first too much absorbed in an endeavour to understand the game he was playing, to take any notice of what was passing among the graver groups; and, but that the sublimity of French royalty rendered such an idea impossible, it might have seemed to some that his exalted preceptress was herself considerably embarrassed, and even agitated, with her task. The very stiff lady of honour who stood behind her chair was dimly surprised, once or twice, by observing the rims of her small white ears tinge ruby red. Even the tips of the fine hand with which she was occasionally obliged to indicate to the stranger the proper card to play, tingled with some such colour. And once, when, in the precipitation of his anxiety, Owen put his hand so suddenly to the cards that she had not time to withdraw her own, and they met in a little shock—the fair bosom and neck suffused also!

If Madame Catherine had paid so much attention to the subject of the debate as Owen gradually began to do, th-

changes of complexion might have been accounted for. The Chancellor Henri de Marle, who was strongly opposed to the Norman expedition, was urging on the council the propriety of renewing offers of peace to Henry V. He discussed the main articles the victor of Agincourt insisted on, among which was the hand of the Princess Catherine! This matter was alluded to in as business-like a manner as the other articles of the treaty; but the princess, who perhaps had some vague idea that she was also a woman, and who had been nursed in dread of the conqueror, might be supposed to add some personal feeling in the discussion.

Owen knew but too well that there was ruin to the Armagnacs in their projected campaign against the English; or else the thoughts that wandered through his soul rendered the idea of conflict with Henry of England more than ever pleasing to him. These contending ideas so much confused him, that it was fortunate for the reputation of his quickness of comprehension, that the unsettled temper of the king did not permit him to continue long at his game. "We are satisfied—the play is lawful," he said, throwing down his cards. "And we need some livelier revelry, or ill thoughts gain on us!—We will see this youth dance."

"Dance, my great liege! and dance in armour?" exclaimed even the immoveable lady of honour.

"Why not? Were we not ourself dancing in armour when we were nigh baked to death? Nay, 'twas in a hideous satyr's skin, when our merry brother of Orleans must needs scatter the flames of his torch among us!" said the king, with evident wildness. "Oh, we died miserably! —most miserable deaths, in that fearful dance! What had De Jouy done that his savage skin clung to him till it consumed him to the bones, and all the waters of the Seine could not give him comfort?"

"The knight will dance, sire, if you will find him a partner," said the constable, whose anxious observation was rarely off the king, and who hastened to check the recollections dependent on that sorrowful revelry.

"A partner?" repeated Charles. "Why, is there not our own favourite one, the Lady of Barbason? Give her your hand, young stranger, and foot a coranto, for she is the gayest and nimblest damsel in all our court."

Involuntary smiles crept over every countenance at this commendation bestowed on the stately dame who kept watch and ward behind the princess's chair. Perhaps she had [illegible]ted it in those younger days to which the king's memory

reverted; but, certes, at this period a very considerable portion of her claims had disappeared.

"Dance, Sir Chevalier Sauvage!—'tis the wont of the French court to dance in complete steel, to show our lightness and dexterity!" said La Trimouille, laughing tartly. But there was something in the king's glance that silenced him, and induced even the formal Dame de Barbason to extend her hand in compliance.

Owen was completely taken by surprise, but the fearful gestures of all around, and his natural courtesy, compelled him to take the offered hand. The Lady of Barbason was either not aware of anything ridiculous or unfounded in the royal eulogium, or she feared to stir the king's excitable frenzy by disobedience to his behests. She accepted Owen as her partner with a profound and most majestic curtsey, and stepped forward amidst a mingled murmur of curiosity and mirth. The council could no longer even feign to continue its deliberations.

The towering head-dress of his partner formed an elaborate cone of gold swathings, nearly a yard high; and her long train of heavily embroidered velvet was likely to prove in itself sufficiently embarrassing to any who, like Owen, was unacquainted with the courtly elaboration of the French science of dancing. The weight of his own armour, and the unanimous peal of laughter that burst from all but the king when they commenced their performance, to the music of some viols and flutes in the antechamber, almost overwhelmed him with shame. But when the young princess herself could no longer withstand her sense of the ridiculous, and joined in the laughing accompaniment with the vivacity of her age and natural lightness, he lost count and almost sense. In an instant the dance became involved—utterly confused—and, making a desperate effort to retrieve a false step, Owen's spurs became entangled in the lady's train. In the attempts which he made to free himself from this entanglement, it became more and more inextricable, while the mirth of the spectators forgot every restraint, and echoed in thickening peals around! Owen grew desperate, and made so violent an effort to free himself that he lost his balance, and was thrown forward full at the feet of Madame Catherine—and, in fact, upon her—for it was only by clasping her in his arms, and making an almost supernatural struggle, that he prevented himself from dashing her over to the ground, and kept upright.

She who was laughing till the tears absolutely showe

from her eyes, now shrieked aloud with terror and surprise. Owen instantly abandoned his hold in the utmost confusion, and the courtiers were at a stand-still, not knowing whether to show concern or mirth. Only the malicious La Trimouille uttered exclamations of horror at the sacrilege perpetrated, and at the awkwardness of the new courtier, when he was suddenly cut short by the king himself.

"Peace, La Trimouille!—let all men show reverence to this stranger!—he hath been prophesied to us!" exclaimed the royal madman. "Ye know it has been foretold that France should be saved by a maiden knight, sent by heaven to our aid! I know the Chevalier Sauvage by his beauty—and this is he!"

"No man can deny that his very falls are fortunate; and he blushes very maidenly!" said La Trimouille. "We shall have Demoiselle Huéline's ballad come to pass, and the king's daughter shall wed the knight who freed the land of Cornwall from a cruel giant!"

As La Trimouille uttered these words, meant for no good, the eyes of the beautiful Welsh knight were raised with so eager a brightness to those of the princess that the pardon his lips demanded seemed already certain and obtained. The glance which Madame Catherine granted it shone upon him in so dazzling an explanation of his prophecy, that for some moments he was bewildered on the glittering summit to which destiny seemed to have cast him with a word! All that was confused and misty in his horoscope vanished as it were with a breath, and the vast scene of ambition beneath his gaze spread beyond the furthest ken of hope.

But Owen's triumphs were not yet at an end. "Let the council be resumed—this knight shall stand beside us and throw light on our resolves!" exclaimed the king. "In truth, we will not part with him again; he shall be our knight, and attached only to our person. Son Dauphin, we take him from you, and henceforth entertain him wholly as our own!"

If Owen felt any reluctance in this sudden transfer of his service, it was inspired by the very visible satisfaction of La Trimouille and the gloom of Taneguy Duchâtel. But it all vanished when the princess spoke, in an eager and beseeching, though undertone, to her brother. "I pray you, let it be thus, sir!—It shall much diminish the terror and gloom of our father's malady to know that he hath so noble and liked
her!—let it be."
it be, my lord!—you need not a spy of Sir Taneguy's
disports!" whispered La Trimouille.

"It shall be so—we make a present of you to our father, Chevalier Sauvage! but we will not cease to do you what service we can of our proper goodwill!" said the Dauphin.

"Speak to the king then, fair knight, if your advice is of so much weight," said the constable, sharply and incredulously. "And tell him that we should be in council on his affairs; for events stand not still, though we do!"

Owen turned eagerly to the king; but before he spoke the unhappy monarch had interpreted his look, and, to the astonishment of all present, walked to his proper place, indicated by the crown laid before it—put the ensign of royal majesty on his brow—and beckoned to Owen in a singular manner to take a place beside him. Courtiers and councillors looked at one another in amazement; but the fox of Armagnac instantly saw the advantages to be reaped. At his whispered request the princess and her lady quietly glided out, with all the personages not belonging to the council; and it resumed its deliberations with such authority as the presidency of an insane sovereign could bestow!

Nevertheless, the matters debated required as much wisdom as ever fell to the share of a ruler. The formation of the siege of Rouen by the English was an event of incalculable danger, and the constable was thoroughly aware of the disgrace which the undisturbed progress of the invaders brought on his administration. He imagined that his rigour had effectually suppressed the Burgundians in Paris, and, but for the opposition of the more timid in the council, he would ere now have departed with the king in person, and the whole remaining forces of the monarchy, to combat the English under the walls of Rouen.

Owen now heard this proposal urged by the constable, and with deep though silent alarm, much as he hated the English and their king. That which his patron Taneguy Duchâtel's hatred against the Duke of Burgundy suggested, still less met his approbation. It also involved the departure of the Armagnac force from Paris, the provost proposing that, instead of marching into Normandy, they should proceed to root the traitorous ally of the invader out of his dominions.

"He has undoubtedly incurred the forfeiture of all fiefs and possessions held of the crown of France," said the chancellor, with a profoundly legal look. "But I misdoubt, if we summon him at the Marble Table, he will come with his forty thousand cut-throats at his heels—and these villanous Parisians await him with open arms!"

"He who wins the field against Henry of England wins it against the Duke of Burgundy!" exclaimed the constable; and he proceeded to urge his opinion with a warmth and earnestness that made converts of many who were previously opposed to it. Owen learned with pain how absolute was his dependence on the terror he had infused into the Parisians. His influence with his party was great and well founded, for he had been throughout the most successful of all their leaders; he was old, of matured and tried sagacity.

The king listened to every speaker in turn, as it seemed, with equal assent. The Dauphin yawned and made no observation—and Owen had the additional pain of perceiving that, whenever the constable urged the safe condition of the capital, and the submission of the faction of Burgundy, he looked at him for support and evidence.

Finally, the flow of opinion passed over almost entirely to the constable, and Henri de Marle seemed weary of making objections. He resigned himself with a kind of melancholy but unconvinced calm to the earnestness of the aged warrior—and Owen saw that the Armagnacs were on the point of making the fatal move their enemies awaited! A dazzling mist was in his imagination, in which he saw nothing distinctly save something of splendour, and glory, and vengeance, that seemed for ever about to vanish from his grasp! His natural impetuosity easily went with any current—and, at the moment when the resolution to march into Normandy was all but adopted, he raised his voice against it! The first words he pronounced attracted so general attention—hinted so much—that it was impossible for him to retract the impression they produced, even if he had been inclined. He informed the constable with the utmost modesty, but with great firmness, that to persevere in the plan would be ruin!—inasmuch as he himself knew that the departure of the Armagnac army would be the signal for revolt among the Burgundians of Paris!

Owen's recent abode in the Boucherie gave a marvellous weight to his information, and the timid—always a numerous body—were glad of a pretext to avoid a decisive measure.

"It is most like!" exclaimed the Archbishop of Rheims. "Christ save all sinners! But saw ye not how even the dreadful excommunication of their chief appalled them not? By my consent, not a single banner shall leave the city!"

"Nor mine! nor mine! nor mine!" echoed around. It was a species of panic.

Of late the Constable d'Armagnac had become aware of a rising spirit of opposition to his measures among the younger councillors, especially those attached to the court of the Dauphin. And now, although himself struck with Owen's words, he was irritated with the testiness of age at this resistance to his will. He demanded from what source the Chevalier Sauvage had his information, threatening terrible vengeance on whoever had dared to conceive so traitorous a project! But by this time Owen remembered the danger to which he exposed Huéline and his late hosts, and he refused to give any explanation beyond the reiteration of his warning.

But La Trimouille, whose fears and malignant feelings were alike aroused by the revelation, supplied the want. "Let us not stir from Paris!" he exclaimed. "In very sooth, ye may believe him, lords; for doubtless he hath wormed himself into the good graces of the wenches there—of the factious and intriguing woman whom they call the minstreless of the Boucherie, of whose frantic daring in behalf of the Burgundians—and in his—we have all heard! By my life! I would put him to the torture, which he 'scaped by her cunning, to learn!"

The burning cheek and fierce eyes of Owen, even his staggering and confused denials, seemed to bear witness to the assertion of the Lord de la Trimouille. At all events, it gave such force to the warning, that the constable gave way to an ebullition of rage. "Then we must not leave for Normandy, until we have torn up the Boucherie to its last stone! until this minstrel-woman, that maddens men with her sorceress tongue, be silenced for ever!"

"Let us rather think of peace with Henry of England; we shall then have fair play with the murderer of Burgundy—to attack the Boucherie is to attack Paris!" said the Chancellor de Marle. The words provoked a warm and angry discussion, almost amounting to a quarrel, which was abruptly, and to the surprise of all, terminated by the king.

"Not a banner shall leave Paris!—whatever this knight advises shall always be, and we will sign no edict which he doth not read and certify to us!" he exclaimed. "Ye know not—but I do—under what warranty he speaks! Let no man utter more breath on the subject in our presence, for on this we are resolved!—And now come with us, beautiful knight, and help us to feed our lions, for it is nigh the hour, and we must all eat or starve!"

In this manner did Charles the Mad put an end to a council

held on matters of so much importance. No one dared openly contest his will, and all were glad perhaps of a pretext of delay, for councillors think that they delay events by delaying their own resolutions on them.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WAVE OF THE CATARACT.

We leave the court to return to the shambles—no unnatural transition in the windings of a Parisian conspiracy. It may be judged whether the circumstances under which Owen Tudor left the Boucherie diminished the Burgundian zeal of its chiefs. De Giac acquiesced in the prudence of letting the supposed tempter escape; but Huéline knew too well that he would not conceal what he imagined he had discovered, to strive to do so herself. To prevent suspicion, it was even necessary to counterfeit an anger she scarcely felt, but was yet so nearly related to the indignation and shame in her heart that its colours were easily assumed.

It was, indeed, well for Owen, with all his courage and strength, that he was beyond the reach of the Caboches when the revelation was made of his alleged dishonourable projects on their betrothed. For weeks after, Simon felled his bullocks with the cruellest strokes, calling them false Armagnacs and traitorous knights! Renaud's exasperation vented itself more rationally in fits of impatience for the advent of the period that was to deliver the whole faction to vengeance,—the departure of the Armagnac expedition into Normandy. But this was unaccountably delayed; and on a sudden it became known in Paris that the Armagnacs would not stir from its walls, and had contented themselves with strengthening the frontier towns towards Normandy!

The disappointment of the Burgundians was universal; but none suffered more than Huéline de Troye. Regard for Owen's safety, pride, disdain, a thousand tumultuous feelings made her at first rejoice in his departure from the Boucherie. But the moment he was fairly gone—the moment she felt the blank his absence left—every sentiment was reversed. She listened to the eulogiums on her virtue, in which even the seldom-praising De Giac warmly joined, with unutterable anguish and an irritation she dared not vent—she who had ızarded so much to preserve the shadow of the substance ə had lost! All the dark recollections and feelings, which

the brightness of noonday passion for awhile effaced, revived in their most hideous and appalling forms. In the briefest lapses of time she passed through the most conflicting moods. Recollections of his love, of his beauty, of the delicious hours of their tenderness, lingered like sleeping fire in her reveries, and were dispelled by bitter and infuriating musings on his arrogance, his refusal to wed her, all she had lost! Sometimes she blamed only herself, upbraided herself with the use she had made of her allurements and superiority of genius and subtlety, as tyrannous advantages! Then again she would work herself into a frenzy of despair and indignation at the remembrance of all she had sacrificed, in vain. Huéline knew that she was beautiful, that she was the first love of Owen Tudor; she felt within herself the soul of an empress—a genius capable of ruling men, and extorting glory even from an unwilling fate! In what, then, was she so inferior, that the sole hope of retrieving her dishonour was for ever denied to her?

These thoughts at times roused a degree of indignation in Huéline's heart that threatened Owen's dominion in it. Often she exulted in a determination never to see him again, to rebuke his pride and insolence of victory, prove the spiritual nature of the affection she bore to him, of the tenderness she had debased, by bidding him farewell for ever, by never seeing him again. But this project was only momentary, only entertained as an impossible luxury of meditation! The love of the minstreless increased in fervour, or rather frenzy, with every hour of her lover's absence—and the most tormenting fears assailed her almost from the first certain instant of her solitude.

She learned that Owen was gone to the palace of St. Pol, from one who went on his traces—certainly with no good intent. The brows of Renaud Caboche lost not the deadly furrow he wore on that espial, for days, and even for weeks. But his enemy was beyond his reach, as he informed Huéline, in apology for not bringing her back the heart's blood of the ungrateful guest on his knife—safe in the royal hostel, where he remained. Huéline supposed that Sir Taneguy had introduced him, according to his promise, into the household of the dauphin. Once more she rejoiced in his safety, and hope revived in her heart. She remembered but too well the power and delirium of the love she had kindled, not to believe that its enthralment would surround Owen wherever he went. She hoped that reflection would suggest to him all the splen-

did attractions of the plan she had formed for his exaltation —that he would find himself neglected and obscure in the brilliant court of the dauphin, and be dazzled by the contrast. She would not imagine for a moment that any temptation could induce him to betray the secret she had confided to him; and she confidently expected that he would not join in an expedition so certain to be destructive to its sharers. She thought that he would soon devise some expedient to communicate with her, to obtain her forgiveness at least, and she more than suspected that he had the means in his power through Gules Caboche and his own esquire. Moreover, Huéline's fertile talent suggested a thousand expedients which she could herself have used under his circumstances!

But when time passed, and no signs of Owen's remembrance appeared, terrible fears began to assail the forsaken minstreless. With her fine sense, if not of morality, of shame and degradation, it is no marvel that in those moments of extreme dejection she imaged herself as a debased wretch whom it was impossible so lofty a heart as Owen's could cherish. The hapless sorceress of love had discovered that satiety is the dregs of all the poisonous nectars of sensuality—she had learned to doubt whether man's passion was like woman's, that glows into the brighter flame with the decay of its gross and material fuel! She now felt assured that Owen could not remain obscure and unnoticed in a court. His beauty and engaging qualities would be certain to attract the attention of women—especially of such women as the example of Isabeau de Bavière had rendered numerous in her court! His pride she thought would be more flattered by these conquests than by fidelity to the daughter of a poor apothecary, whom they would represent to him as the mad leader of a sanguinary mob! Her democratic enthusiasm and scorn still more embittered this idea. But, fortunately for the brief intervals of calm she was yet permitted to enjoy, Huéline never once thought of the Princess Catherine in the light of a rival. She was scarcely known among the Parisians, or remembered, save as a child who was some day to be cast as a make-weight in the scales against the sword of Henry of England.

Pride at first forbade it—but pride yielded—and Huéline frequented the spot where she imagined it possible her lover might seek or hope to find her. It might be permitted to a woman so beautiful and endowed with genius so mastering, to believe in the power of her charms, and she thought or felt that, if she might but once more behold him, she could cast a

spell upon him from which he should not easily free himself again! With this idea she wandered in all the places they had ever frequented together—the woods of St. Germain, the sanctuary of St. Jacques, the dismal windings of the Val de Misère, the prayer-gate of Nicolas Flamel! All was in vain—she neither met nor saw him! As vainly did Huéline make her regular appearance at vespers in Notre Dame—a devotion which Owen knew well she rarely missed, without guessing that the tender solemnity of the evening chants and the glory of sunset through the painted windows of the cathedral soothed reveries not inspired by her breviary—wherein he himself oft played a deified part!

By degrees the veiled form of the minstreless was not unfrequently observed gliding round the inclosures of the Hostel of St. Pol—lingering occasionally at its gates—striving to peer over its lofty palisades and walls. Finally, she deigned even to play the espial, or, as poor Gules Caboche imagined, came by chance upon her, in converse with Rhys ap Goronwy, beneath a certain lime-tree, in the Pré-aux-Clercs. Gules protested, even with tears, that it was by the merest chance they met, for she imagined Huéline was really animated by the hatred and thirst of revenge she pretended to. With the keenest sense of debasement in the presence of this girl, whom she had hitherto regarded with a mild affection of superiority that was not far from something of contempt, Huéline listened to the fervent apologies with which she covered so light an offence! But with all her inquiries, however adroitly urged, she could not learn that Owen Tudor had manifested any desire to see her again—and she did learn that, instead of entering the service of the dauphin, he was in that of the king! The hope immediately struck her that Owen had contrived it in an expectation generally entertained that the king would remain in Paris—and consequently that he should not depart on the Armagnac expedition. Huéline resumed her animating offices in the great Burgundian conspiracy, with a zeal that surprised De Giac himself—when suddenly it was brought to a halt, by certain intelligence that the Armagnacs would not leave Paris, and that they were endeavouring to negotiate a peace with Henry of England!

Still Huéline would not believe that Owen had betrayed her confidence. In vain did the Caboches and the implacable De Giac declare that he must have played the espial among them, and learned their secret, and divulged it. Better than they, she knew what reason they had to think so; but she

would not believe it. Yet, though Huéline had subtlety to deceive half mankind, she could not deceive herself! Her sole refuge, at last, was the hope that, if Owen had said aught to deter the Armagnacs from their enterprise, it was because he could not resolve yet to embrace either alternative offered to him. The Burgundians still expected—at her inspiration—by remaining in a state of quiescence and outward calm—and by raising a popular outcry against the delay—to prevail on the constable to march. She managed even to lull herself into a degree of tranquillity—which was suddenly and for ever broken!

The Lord de la Trimouille had the strange intrepidity to make his appearance in the Boucherie. He came, indeed, with the alleged object of negotiating some arrangement between its chiefs and the Armagnacs, by which their privileges might be restored to them, and he had a right to suppose his errand would make him welcome. He requested to speak with the Demoiselle de Troye on the subject; and although the Caboches refused all negotiation at once, Huéline had secret reasons to desire to grant the courtier the interview he solicited. She won the Caboches with the hope of discovering what resolve the Armagnacs had formed on the subject of their expedition, and received the Lord de la Trimouille alone.

It needed no great skill to discover that La Trimouille's real purpose was very different from the one he alleged. In fact, he abandoned the mention of it on the first few words of rejection uttered by Huéline, or, what amounted to it, the refusal of the Boucherie to accept any concession but the unconditional restoration of their privileges.

"I needed a talisman to get into your enchanted durance, beautiful jongleuresse!" he said, with an easy familiarity in his manner that roused no sympathising sentiment. "Else, I must needs confess my lords of the council think of nothing less than of proposing terms to the Boucherie, the discovery of whose treason keeps us all from our glory, in Paris!—I come with a message from your once guest, and present betrayer, Sir Owen Tudor!"

"Owen!—Sir Owen Tudor!—what message should the Chevalier Sauvage send by the Sire de la Trimouille?" exclaimed Huéline, with a blush that shone like a gleam of ruddy fire over her whole frame, and a vehemence that startled the courtier.

"Oh, he is no longer the Chevalier Sauvage—he grows the

courtliest knight of us all!" replied he. "He is the king's sole favourite—his knight of honour, forsooth—and even the dauphin, who hath corrupters enow already, greatly inclines to him! He is the ladies' sole falcon-on-the-fist now!—sweet looks rain upon him, and everywhere they are busy spinning their networks of smiles to catch him! Nay, he threatens to vanquish us all at our weapons of chivalry—as soon as he has learned how to use them—which will be anon, if incessant practice can do it!"

"He will still lack opportunities, since it seems, albeit ye have the sword of France in your hands—ye dare not raise it, ye Armagnacs, against our invaders!" returned Huéline, without the slightest wavering in her tones.

"He may perchance flesh it among ye of the Boucherie, since he has stirred the constable to such wrath against ye!" returned La Trimouille; and to the silent but dreadful inquiry of Huéline's glance he replied by a much distended account of the revelation wrung from Owen's lips. All his own fears and suspicions were in it; but there was so much of truth, that Huéline could not doubt a discovery had been made!

By what supernatural energy did she control the emotion in her heart, as she replied, apparently with perfect calmness —"And did your council listen to this raving?—the pratings of a woman's wrath?—For tell them, if they need vengeance, that I only formed the project, I, who sported with their fears, in revealing it to an Armagnac espial!—But he added, doubtless, that his informant was the daughter of Jean de Troye?"

"It was guessed as much—you may betray the deer with your finger as well as with your tongue!" said La Trimouille, eagerly and triumphantly. "But he *said* not so!—you are in my power only, beautiful jongleuresse!—in the power of a man who worships, loves—who greatly admires you, fair Huéline!"

"They who dare die are in the power of no man, Lord de la Trimouille!—and *I dare die!*" said Huéline, with startling emphasis. "But how gained the espial the ear of your council, to divulge the wild talk of an angry woman, who never wronged him, perchance?"

La Trimouille was too glad to relate a story to Owen's disadvantage, and which he imagined would cover him with ridicule, to slight the opportunity of relating the circumstances of his presentation at court. Yet, though he gave the account with the most sarcastic humour and raillery, it did not seem

to excite the mirth of the minstreless until he described Owen's fall into the lap of the Princess Catherine, and his own diverting comment on the accident. And yet the single fierce abrupt laugh with which she learned the catastrophe rather startled than encouraged him. La Trimouille was amazed at her manner. "It is well—it is strange—it is as it should be!" she exclaimed, breathlessly, and at intervals, seeming almost to forget his presence. "Let him follow the splendour of his star to the heavens—while I track the darkness of my fate into the abyss!—What matters?—The jest is excellent!—a jest with existence!—We should sport with destiny, since she makes us her fools and playthings!—And is she fair—lovely—so dazzlingly beautiful?—I know that she is young—very young!"

"Of whom speak you, damosel?" said La Trimouille, who had no otherwise alluded to the Princess Catherine than to describe the violation of her royal dignity and state.

"Of Madame Catherine!—we have been thinking—speaking of her incessantly this hour!" said Huéline, with the utmost impatience.

"I did not know it—I have been thinking only of her in whose presence I sit!" replied the gallant courtier; but he satisfied Huéline's desire for information on the point with the utmost liberality. One of the objects of his malignant curiosity and hopes was to discover under what terms Owen had left the Boucherie, which the youth's replies to his sarcastic or licentious insinuations only irritated. He, therefore, exaggerated the loveliness of the princess, remarkable though it was, and strove, by relating some particulars of Owen's court life, to discover whether any sentiment but political animosity mingled in Huéline's opinion of her late guest.

But Huéline baffled him; the very excess of her agony gave her a strange power of concentrated endurance, and of repressing all outward sign of the tumult within! It may well be thought she needed some, when the circumstances detailed by the Lord de la Trimouille are considered. There was indeed something of the sway of a planetary combination in Owen's position.

When not dominated by some paroxysm of his dreadful malady, Charles VI. was by nature even weakly affectionate—and he had taken Owen into the warmest favour, under the strange hallucination that he was an angel in disguise sent to watch over his safety. Owen's beauty and strange garb inflamed the idea—but a singular dream first prompted it. The

unhappy prince dreamed, on the night before Owen's presentation, that his patroness, St. Catherine, dropped a golden ball into his young daughter's lap, with which he pelted a leopard into flight that was advancing to rend them. Owen's bright air, and the remarkable accident that befell him, suggested a marvellous interpretation of this allegory, and the happy audacity with which the Welsh exile entered into the fancy confirmed it.

The terrors that haunted the ghastly madness of Charles VI. were assuaged by his confidence in this celestial emissary. He scarcely suffered him a moment out of his sight; and, consequently, Owen was present not only at the court festivities, but in most ceremonials of state and government in which the king's assistance was advisable or necessary. It was a great object with the Armagnacs to persuade the people that the king himself governed, and especially of the constable, who dreaded the rising power of the dauphin and his favourites. While the supposed warlike angel, sheathed in the magnificent armour the king himself devised for him, stood at his side, his frenzy wore an appearance of deliberation and calm that pleased his councillors. According to La Trimouille, even the wild project Owen had formed and dared to urge on the Armagnacs—of a Welsh revolt—met with their favour and encouragement, and was in serious deliberation! His enthusiasm and daring, the singular influence he had gained, and the desperation of affairs, disposed even the stern and dubious constable to attend to his project.

But, not satisfied with this means of acquiring ascendency, Owen displayed accomplishments that riveted his hold. The young damsels of the court were fond of comparing him to Sir Tristrem, and his skill on the harp fascinated their attention while it completed his likeness to that illustrious prototype. Huéline heard, with an inward bleeding of the heart no language can describe, that he sung her lays of love, the laughing legends she had taught him, to divert the youthful princess of France and her fair retinue! And with such success, that the filial duty of attendance on the king—once a period of dread and gloom—had become the favourite recreation, not only of Madame Catherine, but of the dauphin and his court!

It needed no more to convince Huéline of her danger; yet she managed to conceal the surging emotions of her heart from the observation of La Trimouille. So completely did her smiling carelessness deceive him at last, that he ventured

to reveal the real purpose of his visit. He was brought back to it by a sudden recollection, carried away in the tide of narrative, when Huéline demanded what message he pretended to bring to her from the treacherous guest.

"I would not inform you, damsel, until I had thus put you on your guard against him—lest you should cut my tale short," said La Trimouille, with hesitation. "You must know, first, that we have oft sharp bickerings together, before the court, for we love each other little . . And you may remember we have but little cause. I do at times, to vex him in our proud dames' hearing, tax him—I ask him in what manner he spent his time in the Boucherie—how he learned its secrets? I vaunt your charms . . . your fascinations . . . he blushes and grows angry, and vows he noted none in the butcher's betrothed—protests he betrayed no trust of yours—and finally told me that, little as he loved me, and besotted as he saw I was with your beauty, he would be well pleased if I enjoyed all the favour he had ever shared in the Boucherie! I took him on the word instantly—and if he hath any right of transfer, divine Huéline! love La Trimouille instead of an ungrateful beggar!—He is at your feet."

And the Lord of La Trimouille knelt at the feet of the minstreless of the Boucherie!—There was a short but mighty pause, so thronged was it with thought and emotion.

"He hath none!—But I have a full right of gift!—What do you demand of me?" she replied.

"Only your love!—Only your consent, charming jongleuresse, to leave this foul and loathsome precinct where your beauty, your talents, cannot be appreciated!—to become the queen of La Trimouille's lance—the mistress of all he hath, or is,—of himself and his all!"

"A fair offer!—Only my love!—that is so mere a trifle—he has told you—what has he *not* told you?" said Huéline, brokenly. "But he has made you a gift of little value—which belonged not to him to give, I would say! Yet, since he hath been so good, so condescending—taken so great an interest in me—tell him this proposal of yours, and if he advises me to accept it—say to him—that, that,—I will! Meanwhile, depart!—Armagnacs stay not long with safety in the Boucherie."

This hint was of a kind that always produced a strong effect on La Trimouille. He had learned enough to irritate and annoy his opponent—but yet he ventured to request some mark of pardon—of favour—before he retired. He seconded

this modest request by producing a magnificent carcanet of gems, which he had hitherto kept concealed. It is true that Huéline dashed them from his hand with impatience; but, when he raised them, her manner was changed, and she presented her cheek to his pressure. "Ask him if I did ever the like by him—unasked—thus, thus!" she said, wildly. "But do not believe, do not believe, noble La Trimouille, if he says —— Oh, he will tell you he believes in all his prophecies!—Leave me awhile, to calm.—Ah, if it were to death!"

"Ay, to death!" She echoed her own utterance nearly an hour after La Trimouille's departure, on tiptoe with hope and triumph. "I must forget or madden!—but is death forgetfulness? Why, so, there are poisons enow around . . . O my sire! thou didst not distil these deadly essences for this! But, didst thou know all, thou wouldst not grudge me this serenity,—and thou hast a right to this vengeance! Rid the earth of thy shame—the sun of thy miserable presence—thine own heart of its insupportable weight, Huéline!

"Forgetfulness!—of what?—Of thine only instants of unpainful existence! Unhappy one, why dost thou grudge thyself that little brief pause in misery? Take part with thy tyrannous destiny, league thyself with the falsehood and oppression of mankind, against thyself? Thou didst love—and Heaven made love! Man only made shame, regret, remorse!—And if we live for nothing else, still there is vengeance!—vengeance on him, on fate, on myself!"

And as she uttered the words, or rather formed them in thought, a suggestion crossed her mind like the shadow of a fiend. It thickened—darkened—matured into form!—and she was traversing her chamber in the height of the political Eureka, her eyes flashing like those of a lioness, her black hair tossed and streaming in disorder round her glowing visage, when De Giac suddenly made his appearance. His vigilance and attendance on Huéline had greatly increased of late, but his anxiety to learn what news there might be of the Norman expedition was his present apology.

"It is abandoned—the Armagnacs remain in Paris!" replied Huéline.

"Then our game is lost—and I depart," returned the envoy, in a tone of bitter disappointment. "And I, too, am lost—Heaven knows I have enemies enow with the duke—and this ill success will ruin me too! He cannot see France all lost—he must perforce unite with the Armagnacs—and leave them the sway!"

"Nothing is lost while men's hearts remain true to them!" replied Huéline. "We outnumber the Armagnacs in Paris already—as the sands the anchors on a beach! We need but arms—the violent fling of a wave—to rise and overwhelm them! Could we but introduce as many armed of our friends without as should suffice to get us our old pikes and mallets again from the Châtelet and the Hôtel de Ville, Paris should again be ours with as much certainty as that all men shall be—death's!"

"'Tis true, mayhap; but what of that? Our knights' steeds are trained to vault, but not over walls so lofty as those of Paris!" replied De Giac, morosely, and yet inquiringly.

"What doth Perrinet le Clerc? Did you not tell me you would seek him, to learn if he is still angry?" said Huéline abruptly.

"I have begged of him thrice as he went to the classes, and a dozen times as he entered a wine-shop, and he passes me mutteringly, as if he heard me not! I'll warrant me, he is as angry as a woman that has lost her lover or her favourite popinjay!" replied the emissary.

"And that were oft the greater loss of the two," said Huéline, with a smile full of melancholy and bitterness. "But why should he be angry to no purpose? Is not his father quartenier of St. Germain? and do not quarteniers go to bed every night with the keys of their wardgates in their houses? Did not Perrinet once honour me with what he called his love? Did I not most ignorantly reject a pearl of priceless worth when I was not skilled in such jewellery? But hath not all Paris now informed me that he is the prodigy of eloquence of our time—the Abelard of the fifteenth century? Have I not been called the Héloise of mine, at least when Jean de Troye's fortunes were worth flattering! It was in those days that Perrinet swore he loved me! and, if my disdain wounded his pride, he sufficiently avenged it by being among the first of Jean's followers to desert him! We are even there; and what hinders but that I too should desire to be the disciple of so famous a doctor, like the poor abbess of the Paraclete?"

"Our Lady forbid thou shouldst be such a disciple to such a master!" said De Giac, with a vehemence of disapproval that rather irritated than surprised Huéline.

"Do not believe—do not dream it, Lord de Giac!" she said, with an expression of disgust which scarcely did justice to the feeling that dived like a deadly sickness to her heart.

"Perrinet will never be to me aught but the betrayer—one of the betrayers, alas! of Jean de Troye—father I dare not call him now! Treacherous and malignant wretch! he cannot complain if his own arms are used against himself; if, with feigned shows of admiration, by stirring his bad heart from its murky depths of hatred and vengeance, I win him to do one redeeming deed in all his time!—to procure the keys of the Gate of St. Germain and admit our friends to the rescue, some of these gentle May moonlights!"

"Huéline!—Demoiselle! though he might forgive the maiden who despised his youthful love, can he pardon the poor scholar that overwhelmed him with refutation—the minstreless who rescued his enemy?" returned De Giac.

"He loved me once—the memory of love is not so short as some men deem!" said Huéline, a little wildly. "You know not what the vanity of a pedant can believe! Does not Huéline repair the wrong inflicted by the poor scholar, imploring *his* antagonist to become *her* master? And the minstreless who rescued his enemy, and knew not then how little worthy he was of the attempt, thirsts now for vengeance on him and all his tribe!"

"But is this possible?" said De Giac. "Know you not, Huéline, on what evil terms the father and son have parted?—that Perrinet's shadow never darkens the threshold of the quartenier of St. Germain?"

"What matters that? There are kinships which, stretch the heartstrings as you will, never entirely sunder!" replied Huéline. "Or if the father has worked so long in his trade that he is of iron too, the mother, I promise you, messire, is made of softer stuff!—and doth she not still live?"

"She seemed to me of flesh, and had plenty of it," said De Giac; and, forgetting for a moment his habitual dissimulation and self-command, he gazed with a look of the utmost tenderderness at Huéline, and muttered, "A mother! it is a gentle word! How sweet a mother wert thou, Huéline, if gentle blood rushed to thy cheeks as richly tinted as that of Jean de Troye in thy veins doth now!"

"A mother!—in my turn, I echo you, messire! Our Lady forbid!" said Huéline, with a quivering spasm and a glance at the phials of death around.

"Wherefore say you these words so earnestly? Is there a sweeter and more honoured title for woman to covet?" said De Giac, with an emotion that made even his adust and crafty visage amiable.

"What, here, in the Grande Boucherie, with the bleatings of the lambs for ever in our ears!—or there, in the great shambles of the world!" said Huéline, wildly. "No, Sire de Giac! no son of misery and death shall ever call me mother! Huéline de Troye at least will not give to slaves the thankless boon of life!"

"Slaves, indeed!—slaves of shadows—of sounds! Else wherefore—but no matter, your betrothed is a good Burgundian!" said De Giac, interrupting himself; and, taking a few steps up and down the room, the politician succeeded in silencing the man.

"It is well, it is a most excellent suggestion," he said, returning. "Perrinet le Clerc has a mother! and one that wept when I told her how her son was maltreated on the parvis of Notre Dame! But Perrinet is proud as the first rebel, and his father has vowed that, until he returns of his own accord, and craves pardon and readmittance, his doors shall never again be opened to him."

"This shall he do, were it ten times a greater degradation to kneel to a father one has wronged!" said Huéline. "You have oft said I have magic in me—let me essay its spells! Our prodigal shall return to his home, and if he chances to stumble on the keys of St. Germain, is it impossible that the garrison of Pontoise should despatch what chivalry might be collected with secresy and speed, to lie in wait, at midnight, till its hinges turn?"

"Marvellous subtlety! Hadst thou been Eve in Paradise, the serpent would have been the deceived one!" exclaimed the statesman, in the utmost admiration. "But will Caboché and his jealous boy permit us to angle with so precious a bait, for—what if it should slip the hook?"

"They must not suspect—they shall not suspect!" replied Huéline. "They know nothing of Perrinet's ancient love; but they know his present injuries, and are mad with their own! Messire, I have only to jingle the keys of St. Germain in Caboche's ears, to make him deaf to any other sound! But Perrinet will need a pretext to come, nor must we trust him too soon—I will write an epistle to him—such as forced the icy heart of Abelard to relent over the ruin he had made! De Giac, you shall be the bearer."

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONSPIRACY OF PERRINET LE CLERC.

OWEN TUDOR seemed certainly to be born under a fortunate star. He needed but one circumstance to make him happy—triumphant—all blest—and it happened!

The grandest projects his ambition or patriotism could form, which his hatred of Henry of England and the extreme loveliness of Catherine of France could inspire, seemed approaching gratification. The Constable d'Armagnac consented to his plans of a Welsh insurrection—he was smiled on by the youthful princess in a manner that, but for the barriers of etiquette between them, seemed to assure him of a most splendid fulfilment of his prophecy!—He had satisfied his remorse—yielded to the flow of his great destinies—soothed the indignation of his proud soul at his disgraceful expulsion from the Boucherie—by so long making no effort to renew the links that bound him to Huéline de Troye.

The unremitted attendance which the king exacted might have pleaded his excuse, if he had been inclined to make one. But the Welsh prince was exasperated, and full of regret and superstitious fear. The singular circumstance of his reception at court inspired him with no ill-founded idea that he had escaped, in Huéline, from the fatal mermaid that was to mislead all his glorious career. The splendid enigma of his horoscope seemed to be interpreted by the first smile of the daughter of France, and her subsequent conduct confirmed the brilliant hope.

Severely as Catherine of France had been educated by a mother who approved of no license but her own, Catherine had not failed to discover that she was beautiful. But the audacious eyes of Owen gave an electric impulse to the womanly feelings in her heart: never until then had she read so pleasing a commentary on the text of her charms. She imagined herself placed on too lofty an elevation to have any reason to dread the consequences. She was coquettish and light-hearted by nature, and Owen Tudor was the handsomest, bravest, and most accomplished chevalier in her father's court. She knew herself to be the destined peace-offering to the formidable enemy of her country and family. A little enjoyment on the way to this hard destiny might be pardoned! Owen received such encouragement in secret smiles and glances as it was possible for the severe and watchful

etiquette of the French court to allow. He seemed to lack only opportunity to obtain much more!—perhaps assurances which should add the plight of a royal bride to the daring visions that pictured to him his land redeemed, and its diadem circling his own brow!

Owen was not insensible to the harshness and infidelity of his conduct; but his magnificent hallucination blinded him for awhile to every other consideration. The strongest influences of ambition and youthful vanity were upon him—even the fiery emotions the unhappy minstreless had taught to glow in his heart worked against her. She was absent, and her youthful rival was almost continually present, in all the majesty and awe of her lofty rank. With Owen to love was a species of imaginative worship, from which the enchantress of the Boucherie's too human frailty had for ever degraded her. The royal splendour that guarded the budding loveliness of Madame Catherine, surrounded her with a magic illusion that allowed full scope to his romantic fancies. Moreover, he persuaded himself that Huéline's honour, which the constant insinuations of La Trimouille assailed, required him to manifest a total indifference to her. And yet it was with difficulty that he concealed his bitter feelings, when La Trimouille returned with a vaunting, and yet sneering, account of his reception in the Boucherie. But he delivered it in the presence of the court, and of the Princess Catherine; and Owen seemed to enter heartily into the jest that was made of the ready jongleuresse, and gave La Trimouille permission to pursue his good fortune, with a smile that was his first great success in the arts of civilization. His only refuge was to strive to believe that Huéline was indeed one of those terrible women of France against whom the monk of Llanvaes had warned him—without faith, without constancy, almost without discrimination! Yet he remembered too well the past to believe in himself. The maxims that resounded in that corrupt court persuaded him that it would not be impossible to unite the enjoyments of love and ambition. And now, in his turn, he sought the places where he imagined it was possible to meet with Huéline. But it was too late; and the disappointment embittered the taste of all his successes, when he received an epistle couched much in the following terms, which Rhys took from a person who wore the habit of a mendicant scholar, so far as he remembered it.

triumph, knight!—nay, dearest Owen, your destiny
Some irresistible magic of fate must indeed master

the proud heart which now truly woos, unwooed! Huéline de Troye (hast thou forgotten the name?) is at thy feet—suing for pardon, mercy, love!

"Dear knight! in vain I have counterfeited coldness with with thee, coquetry with La Trimouille! I have sought thee everywhere, but thou wert not willing to meet with me, or else—ah, thou canst not have forgotten how once I loved and frequented the woods of St. Germain! Sweetest woods! where, methinks, the poets first learned that the nightingale's song is only of love!—But it was not pleasure kept *me* from *thee!* Out of thy presence, there were none for me in heaven—how, then, in the dismal Boucherie, which thou wert wont to hate, to despise? But thou art happy, my soul's idol!—and 'tis enough. The magnificence of a court is around thee now! Never could I have been aught to thee but a honeysuckle that sweetens the air, as the wayfarer passes—a fountain by a weary roadside, that refreshes the pilgrim as he hastens on to quaff the wine of his rest!—but wilt not even let me be as these to thee?

"Thou seest—I struggle no longer with destiny—and wherefore should I? Sometimes, from the bosom of darkness, an irresistible hand beckons us—and we follow. Yawning precipices and ghastly depths avail not to warn us back! Why, therefore, when from rosy clouds, to an undreamed paradise—for I have by no means, my Owen, exhausted all the delights, all the allurements that love can offer—but thou canst not have forgotten all the past!—I did not woo, alas! once in vain!—Shall I now, when I implore thee to return, for a few brief moments, to those arms which once thou didst swear encircled for thee the universe?

"Yes, my Owen! my beautiful!—young god of my idolatry!—I must see thee again, or die! I talk no longer of scruples, of pride, of honour, of redemption, of marriage! . . . I am thine. I absolve thee of all oaths, of all promises! Thou hast sworn none, we will agree to say it, and thou needst observe none, save—that thou wouldst love me! I ask nothing more—nothing but love!—nothing but leave to love thee! I am wise in the stars—I know that thy destinies must needs soar sightlessly above mine! But still, while some vestige of thy steps is on the earth—I know not what I say—yet, if ever thou didst love me, if ever Huéline was in aught dear to thee, let me beheld thee again—gaze in those dear eyes once more! Let us part for ever, if it must be—but with some taste of sweetness in the parting draught.

"Come to me, then, here—here in the Grande Boucherie! —I can only see thee again in safety in the most insecure place of all—there only will thy presence not be suspected. I have a farther reason! My faith in thy noblest qualities, in the qualities which dazzled me into ruin, was shaken by thy abrupt departure from the Boucherie! To restore my confidence in thy courage, thou must brave all the dangers from which then thou didst flee—and return! Yet it may be without any danger, or deemst thou thy Huéline would invite? I did instruct thee once, my Owen, how to quit the Boucherie unnoticed—to re-enter it is but to reverse the process! Seek the ruins of the house of Jean de Troye—mount his deserted half-crumbling staircases, guided by the little lamps of asbestos that shall flame like Love's own breath, to guide thee—emerge on his roof—smell the sweetness of my May roses, and follow their fragrant wooing—ah! too well, too well, thou knowest whither!

"*To-morrow at midnight!*—I demand but this one, this last satisfaction—this eternal farewell! Else, will I come and take it in the presence of all your royal dames—the noble courtesans of Isabeau—among whom, I doubt not, there are already some in whose presence you would shame to be re-recognised by the minstreless of the Boucherie! Come!—or either, in my despair, I must surrender myself to the splendid ignominy offered by La Trimouille, or to the knives of the Caboches! This I swear by all that is sacred!—by all that is unhallowed, above earth, or below it! Come! if thou wouldst not have me deem thee recreant, not to love only, but to that manhood and knighthood which are nobler in thy sight! And yet love indeed shall await at that lattice whence we have so often watched the rising of the star thou followest—that star Glendower prophesied on—to which such golden imaginings cling!—I would I could say beauty, too; but thou hast seen courtly charms! The remembrance of Huéline is no longer fair, even in the memory of first passion, that deifies!

"Plead no excuse—I will take none! None whatever! There is ruin, there is death in thy refusal! In thy acceptance there is—yes, I think I have yet charms, yet passion, yet spells, not exhausted! To-morrow, if thou wouldst not give up me—thyself—to destruction, as soon as darkness veils the earth, as softly and as secretly as it glides into the arms of ocean, come thou, my lover, my beloved, to these that wait for thee so longingly that all their fibres ache even now to clasp but air instead!—Come! it is but necessary to make

Huéline happy, in the hope that thou shouldst take the wreath of roses thou wilt find hung on the door of the sanctuary of St. Jacques to-morrow at dawn. But not by me! I am watched, suspected! I can but see thee safely in the bosom of danger—and there I await thee or destruction!"

It needed not all this eloquence of despair to win Owen Tudor. The embers of his early love glowed still amidst all the gleams and rising shoots of his new and ambitious hopes. He burned with jealousy and wrath against La Trimouille; he was piqued on his courage—the corrupt miasma of a court had tainted even his generous nature. He persuaded himself that compassion, that mere humanity, required him to grant this slight satisfaction of an eternal farewell to one who had sacrificed so much for him. He thought he could convince Huéline of the expediency, of the necessity, of such a parting—certainly without making any allusion to the Princess Catherine. We cannot elucidate all his reasons; but the wreath of roses disappeared from the church of St. Jacques, to the great scandal of certain pious persons who observed it, and imagined it was a votive offering to some saint.

Little dreamed Owen Tudor of the circumstances under which Huéline's letter was written, or he might have discovered reasons to balance all those fine ones above stated. Her precipitous destiny could not pause, mighty and many as were the obstacles it encountered!

Huéline had perceived, with a ravening jealousy which henceforth preyed incessantly on her heart, that Owen would look for the accomplishment of his magnificent hopes and prophecies in wooing the daughter of the King of France! Elevated as might be the position of the princess, it was not above the splendour of his star. Huéline did not and would not believe there was a talisman in royalty to protect any woman against the sentiments naturally inspired by so noble an impersonation of manly beauty. The youth of the princess, the pride of her august blood—not even the strict etiquette of the French court that guarded her—nothing gave Huéline comfort or confidence. To separate her lover by some impassable barrier, prove to him the impossibility of his hopes, were her only chances of retrieval! This conviction gathered into one dread shock all the points of concussion that Huéline's soul had found in the injustice and prejudices of mankind! The struggle seemed to her, at times, to be with Fate itself! —yet she was only urging it on. Every hour and every

event heightened her jealousy, her fears, her despair, and frantic resolves; or she must needs have paused on the wild and tangled path she had entered.

The mendicant of the parvis executed his task with the dexterity to be expected from one so skilled in human nature and in dissimulation. But Perrinet le Clerc's heart was a well-prepared soil for hemlock seed! He found himself deserted by his own party, an object of contempt to the Burgundians, his injuries unavenged, his vanity wounded in its tenderest points, his prospects of ambition all closed! Huéline's letter was the first balm to these wounds. It was conceived in the most flattering terms of cajolery, acknowledging the superiority of the dialectics and eloquence she had vanquished, requesting pardon for her former presumption, and entreating the scholar to honour her with some lessons in the philosophy of Aristotle, which he seemed to have fathomed. With all his vanity—and Perrinet possessed a liberal share—he could not but suspect some drift in this request, veiled by the apparent one, especially considering that it came from the head-quarters of the Burgundians. But he imagined himself as cunning as any inhabitant of the Boucherie; the recollections of his early passion had still some power over him; his maltreatment by Owen Tudor, and desertion by his own faction, rendered his devotion to the Armagnacs somewhat precarious; and, though he deliberated so long as to excite fears in the mendicant, Perrinet agreed at last to put the learned daughter of Jean de Troye through a course of moral philosophy, at the handsome rate of three sols parisis a lesson. He was poor, and the Boucherie was rich.

Perrinet's reception among the Burgundians, like that of his strangely reversed antagonist among the Armagnacs, was flattering in the highest degree. He was received as a man whose wrongs from one faction gave him the dignity of a martyr to the other. Simon Caboche welcomed him warmly, protesting that, if he had not thought Owen Tudor a knight of the Duke of Burgundy, he would not have lifted a finger in his behalf. He added to the rancorous animosity of Perrinet, as well as stirred up his own, by a full recital of Owen's supposed treason against the laws of hospitality. And the scholar of the Sorbonne was at once gratified and alarmed to the highest with this proof of the haughty virtue of his destined pupil.

Huéline had anticipated rather disgust than difficulty in her task; but she too was surprised, and even slightly alarmed, at the dignified coldness and majesty of the manner in which her new preceptor presented himself in the house of the

Taboches, and to her notice. No gleam in his magisterial eyes betrayed his secret thoughts as he scanned the ripened beauty of his early love, and exulted in the vengeful projects which recollections of his former failure mingled largely with his reviving hopes.

Time had modified the character of Perrinet le Clerc, or the necessities of his position suppressed some of its salient points, since the time when Huéline first despised him. Profligate he still was, strongly attached to sensual pleasures; but he had studied hypocrisy as essential to his project of raising himself to the level of the great oppressions of the age in the only way feasible to a man of plebeian birth—by the church. It was no slight satisfaction to the bitter temperament of Perrinet to rebuke with his cold exterior the expectations he secretly believed Huéline cherished of the unbroken influence of her charms. Huéline was indeed at first a little dismayed, but she noted the excessive neatness of his clerical garb and the profusion of scented oil that bathed his hair, and took courage.

Luckily Perrinet had a great contempt for women, though most part of his time had been spent in subjection to their fantasies. He could not but place some trust in the assurances of that charmed tongue, and in the flattering compliments that flowed on its silvery melodies. Vague suspicions, indeed, entered his ungenerous soul when he noted the deep blushes, the biting lip, the quivering eyelids, with which Huéline listened to the legend of her rejection of Owen Tudor. The worst he imagined was, however, only that she repented of her virtue, and would probably be less scrupulous if any other opportunity for its exercise should happen. Yet both players felt an embarrassment they had not expected when fairly set down to their cards; that is, when Perrinet commenced his instructions with all the pomp of the lecture-room, and found himself in a short time left alone with his beautiful pupil.

Perrinet was in reality learned in the pedantic science of the age. He knew that learning, or the reputation of it, was essential to his projects. It was only by skill in the wordy science then held in so much estimation that he could hope to attain the great objects of his aspiration. Of latter years he had applied himself to his studies with as much perseverance as was consistent with his naturally restless and boisterous disposition. He desired to make a display of his learning, to humble the pride of Huéline, as a preparation to his farther aims. And thus did Huéline find herself baffled in a manner she had least expected. In spite of all her overtures and in

sinuating smiles, Perrinet obstinately adhered to his rôle of pedant and philosopher.

And thus was the minstreless, with a heart long wearied in the pursuit of those vain sciences, and panting with far other thoughts and memories, compelled once more to listen to the tedious exposition of their rudiments! The categories of Aristotle once more vexed her very sense of hearing! With an imagination that lightened at a glance infinitely beyond the slow illumination of Perrinet's intellectual torch, she was compelled to follow its languid radiance with apparently riveted attention and admiration. But she succeeded at length, largely aided by her tutor's own vanity, in making him believe that she in reality entertained a respect for his learning and talents that would facilitate the farther progress he desired to make.

This continued for a time—the impatient Caboches themselves were compelled to admit the danger of any premature revelations with the Armagnac scholar, and the trust of all the conspirators in Huéline was now absolute.

Perrinet began gradually to work on his own secret plans. It seemed as if his object was rather to instruct his fair pupil in the philosophy of Épicurus than in that of his great predecessor—if it be the philosophy of atheism and pleasure that some such scholiasts have pretended. Huéline fell so readily into this course of study that Perrinet himself was surprised at his own progress, and could not but cherish the flattering idea that she had certainly conceived a deep passion for him, founded on admiration of his genius! He might well be credulous, considering all that he knew—and all that he did not know. Huéline's very summons amounted almost to an invitation to renew his former sentiments, which he had not concealed from her. His demoniac hatred against Owen Tudor made the prospect of a triumph where he had so signally failed, irresistibly delicious to the scholar of the Sorbonne. That could not be if his intentions had been honourable to Huéline! And the times were changed since she was the daughter of the powerful demagogue of Paris! She was now a beggared orphan, and marriage would for ever have barred the towering ecclesiastical ambition of Perrinet le Clerc.

This distant skirmishing was protracted by both parties for a time with the dread and yet impatience of generals about to plunge their armies into irretrievable and decisive conflict. Huéline feared the very success of her own projects. She perceived too well that the allurements of sensual passion

must be added even to the revengeful sentiments in Perrinet's heart, to overcome his pride and fears sufficiently to enter the path she had chalked out for him. She did not, indeed, suspect the full baseness of his purposes; and it was almost a matter of indifference to her what they might be, resolved that they should only serve her own. She returned his dark seeds of immorality in blossoming roses, but with a heart so fraught with love for another, to endure; and even affect to return the indications of a passion that would at any time have been disagreeable to her, was almost an insupportable suffering. Some cruel magic of association perpetually recalled Owen Tudor to her memory, chilled her coquetry, broke the meaning of her glance! The evil glow in the eyes of the profligate scholar was very different, it is true, to the fire of love in those of her youthful mountaineer; but it recalled the recollection painfully. His words of admiration brought the blood to her cheeks, with the related and yet contrasted sounds that lingered in her heart! His gradual and insidious approaches bitterly recalled the chivalrous struggle in the heart of Owen Tudor which so long protracted his fatal avowal! But Perrinet le Clerc interpreted all he saw through a haze of vanity that changed the hues of everything entering it. How often did he congratulate himself on his progress when Huéline's gaze seemed fixed upon him in the absorption of admiration—and yet he had vanished wholly from its perception, and the beautiful and warlike form of the Chevalier Sauvage filled all the vision of her soul! How often did the start, the blush, the tears that rushed to her eyes when he gradually ventured to drop words of confession and passion—the blood that tingled to the touch which, in the impressiveness of eloquence he occasionally forgot, he had laid on her hand—how often did the sudden flush or languid glow in her eyes—deceive the subtle scholar of the Sorbonne! If at times there was a vagueness of meaning in the smile that flitted on her lips, a melancholy in the gaiety with which she encouraged his playful advances, Perrinet Le Clerc's psychology suggested that love in the capricious sex of the minstreless often took the most variable and opposite forms.

But the impatience of her devouring fears would not suffer Huéline long to endure this pause in events. She was astonished at the guarded manner in which her preceptor avoided all allusion to former times—all open revelation of the feelings her penetration discovered to be hourly regaining strength in his soul. Her subtle glide seemed met by so cold and edgeless a surface that it could not form a coil. Perhaps

—for Huéline was a very woman after all—the circumstance piqued both her curiosity and pride. Her subtlety could not long be deceived; and she found a depth and machination in Perrinet's designs that kindled her interest, as it does that of a skilful chess-player when he meets with an antagonist of equal ability. But the scholar of the Sorbonne was not fashioned long to resist the mastery of such a mind, so seconded by the strongest passions of his depraved nature. Huéline drew him from his strength with irresistible displays of tenderness and yielding! She excited his ambition by vague but splendid insinuations of the vast rewards he might deserve and obtain from the Burgundians, while she stirred the vengeance of his rancorous spirit by renewing the memory of the wrongs he had sustained from the whole Armagnac faction and their now favourite knight. She even took a bitter pleasure in exaggerating those circumstances to Perrinet. She had acquired the art of pronouncing Owen's name without colouring, without a tremble in her tones; but that might be accounted for in the nature of the injury she was herself supposed to have suffered. And there were times when frenzied love and jealousy gave her words the true impress of the feelings she counterfeited. But Perrinet's effusions of black malignity, and thirst for revenge on the young Welsh knight, were not so pleasing to Huéline as he imagined, save that it gave her an opportunity to wonder at the patience with which he endured wrongs so intolerable!

This introduced the great topic; for Perrinet felt that the compliment was a veiled but galling reproach; and he apologised for his seeming tameness by alleging the impossibility of obtaining vengeance. He was answered with vague hints, with broader intimations, with glimpses into the interior of the great conspiracy at work! Perrinet listened with increasing interest—and suspicion. He took courage in the confidence placed in him—the first faint sketch of the part he might play in a vast movement which should overwhelm his enemies with ruin, did not startle him! Perrinet remembered too bitterly his father's just harshness to him to be much disturbed at the idea of betraying him to serve any purpose of his own! The moral guilt involved in Huéline's plans gave him courage to confess that included in the projects he himself had formed. It convinced him that Huéline was elevated above the common weakness and prejudices of her sex—at [illegible] he said so when he dared at length to give utterance to [illegible] flagitious reveries! It is true that the unfortunate [illegible]less had reached that desolate elevation on which

common opinions and motives act powerlessly as the wind of the valleys on the summits of the mountains. But the scholar's gross incentives to the passions—his efforts to remove all moral restraint from their impulses—excited only the contempt and loathing of an intellect that had run the whole circle of speculative science—and, it might be, had arrived at conclusions as destructive and hopeless—but whose nobler sentiments revolted from their consequences. Nor was the scholar's amorous eloquence likely to be dangerous with one who had drained the wildest nectars of passion—whose experience mocked at all the phantoms of pleasure with which he thought to seduce the imagination of his pupil! But what powerful motives must have been at work in the heart of Huéline, when even the final and complete revelation of the scholar's nefarious designs inspired her only with so much indignation as sufficed to subdue him altogether to her will—to promise all that her vengeance and ambition demanded—all that the Burgundians needed—even what in his soul he most abhorred, submission to his angry sire? It is true that it was only to obtain the means of betraying him!

De Giac urged on this revelation with a jealous anxiety that scarcely allowed him any rest. The sufferings of this statesman were not altogether unequal to his merits. He paid Huéline the extraordinary and undeserved compliment of believing that, though impervious to the seductions of youth and beauty, she might be enthralled by the charms of intellect and learning! One evening he entered as usual, in a very discontented mood, after having watched the scholar out of the Boucherie, to learn what progress had been made. A fiery glow was on Huéline's complexion, her lips were swollen, her bosom panted like the sea—yet she uttered a wild laugh of exultation when she perceived him, clasped both his lean but quivering hands in hers, and wrung them for an instant! She abandoned the grasp indeed almost with a fling, but even the politician was scarcely so much rejoiced with the news that followed.

"Go, Sir Pierre! go—after this, let women be the only plotters!" she exclaimed. "Thou hast but to win the prodigal leave to return to his home! Hasten, depict his starvation, his misery, his despair, to his mother! To his father, his submission and repentance! He is ours—I mean, he is mine, or shall be—when we are both in a position to defy the hideous wrath of the Caboches!—Hear you, my Lord de Giac! do not fail to tell the Duke of Burgundy that I deserve some recompense at his hands!—Perrinet has prof-

fered me his love, but he, too!—he cannot think to wed the orphan of Jean de Troye! He too, forsooth, hath aspirations which Huéline—which a wife—would ruin! His learning and his talents, he believes, he swears, will raise him to the loftiest honours of the church—and Huéline may share them, can share them, only as—his mistress! He knows the grandeur and elevation of my soul—that I am above all womanish scruples.—He!"—And she broke off in a torrent of wild discordant laughter that yet seemed sympathetic—for De Giac laughed too, in a low, terrible undertone.

The minor circumstances of this conspiracy that was to shake a kingdom were rapidly arranged. Perrinet was admitted into the complete confidence of the Boucherie, and his new allegiance was confirmed by a discovery of the real rank and office of his mendicant ally, and the formidable preparations in readiness.

Huéline committed herself to the fling of the wave, thus far, reckless of all consequences. She knew that her own life was in the dreadful game, for the fury of party spared neither sex nor age; but she played it without pause or hesitation. Thus far her terrible musings, inspired by jealousy and passion, shaped only the separation of her lover from the object of his unjust preference, the triumph of tearing him from the very clutch of destiny—the joy of showing him that royalty and power which so dazzled him, in debasement and overthrow—of forcing him to respect what he had most despised, in the ascendency of a populace! But now the master-impetus received a sudden check—even from itself.

The approach of the opportunity of vengeance elicited such expressions of their purposes from Owen's numerous enemies that Huéline shuddered to perceive the general ruin she meditated must include the personal destruction of the object of her still idolatrous passion—unless she hit on some expedient to preserve him. The idea of destroying her beautiful lover had never occurred to her as a possibility, save in maddening moments when she dreamed of forcing him to share destruction with her—of leaping down some black precipice of death in his arms! But the Burgundian leaders imagined her animated with equal resentment against the ungrateful guest. De Giac's smiles at his name meant as much deadly malice, Huéline felt, as the loud, fierce threats of Renaud Caboche. The Master-Chief himself seemed to project a revenge so horrible and
t even he only alluded to it brokenly and with
But Huéline knew what to think of the wrath
ich in love with blood that he had called his

only daughter after its heraldic name. Perrinet's hatred combined all these species of malevolence; and the dreadful thoughts roused by these intimations, mingled with a reviving hope, prompted her to write the epistle on record.

She thought—unhappy and too loving heart!—that nowhere else could she believe in his safety than pressed to it—that thus she could learn the real state of his feelings—thus only! If she could only ascertain, by a refusal to this wooing that should concentrate all the spells of love, that he no longer loved her—that he abandoned her utterly—that he was altogether lost in the blaze of his new fortunes—then she thought that she could resign him to his doom without regret, without terror, without the insupportable anguish of the heart to which death is a relief!

But, if he came!—what brilliant hopes flashed around her like the meteors of a troubled but beauteous sky at the idea! What fascination might not love multiply to allure him—what gratitude must he not owe for his preservation amidst dangers so appalling! What irresistible influence would not the rush of events exercise upon him! Ah, he would be once again hers—all hers!

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GATHERING OF THE STORM.

It was the evening of a memorable day for Paris, Saturday, the twenty-eighth of May, 1418, when Perrinet le Clerc set out from the Boucherie, to return to his father's house, into which for more than three years he had not once set foot.

The benevolent mendicant, to whose exertions the projected reconciliation was so much due, accompanied him. Everything was satisfactorily arranged. The Armagnac ironmonger had consented to receive back his prodigal, on condition that he acknowledged his offences and promised not to repeat them. His mother was in ecstasies of joy, and preparing a festival to receive him. It was not doubted that, in the hilarity and confidence of this restored union, Perrinet might manage to possess himself of the keys of the gate of St. Germain, confided to his father's custody as quartenier, or alderman, of that district. In case of the worst, he was provided with tools to force open the cellar and strong box in which he well remembered his father nocturnally deposited his keys, money, and other valuables.

At the gate of St. Germain, a body of eight hundred hors-

men, consisting of the boldest partisans of the Burgundian cause, secretly collected at Pontoise, and under the command of its governor, L'Isle Adam, were to present themselves at midnight for admission. To give them that, was the part of Perrinet le Clere, whose cloth forebade him to take any more active share in the affair. The Boucherie was meanwhile to be in readiness, to take instant advantage of the arrival, and raise the whole city in insurrection. Devoted as the populace was to John the Fearless, only weapons and the surprise were necessary to transform it into an army capable of overpowering all resistance!

Hardened though he might be, the scholar of the Sorbonne needed the zealous superintendence that never once abandoned him, as a support against the faltering of purpose which at times assailed him when he drew nigh his father's house on the Petit Pont. Yet he carefully concealed this weakness from De Giac, to whom he knew it would only be a subject of ridicule.

The grotesque gables of the dwelling of Perrinet le Feron were visible the moment they passed through the gate of the Petit-Châtelet to enter on the bridge that connects the Isle of the City with the southern shore of the Seine. A curious sign, formed of a bundle of iron utensils, hung by a chain from a projecting beam over the door-way, and somewhat resembling a nosegay, procured the shop its designation of the Bouquet de Fer. The back windows overlooked the turbid waters of the river, and now shone brightly in the sunset. Perrinet in general carefully avoided this neighbourhood, as offensive to his pride; and when he recognised all these well-known objects, to do him justice, his steps hesitated—and he needed the recollection of all Huéline's lures, all the sneering composure in his companion's visage, to persevere. Revengeful and unfeeling as Perrinet was by nature, he could not but remember with some quiverings of remorse the anguish he had inflicted on his kinsfolk almost throughout his whole career, and which he was about so signally to crown. He paused, in spite of De Giac's stern and startled look, and, complaining of the heat, coupled with something about the wine he had drunk in the Boucherie, covered his face with his hands, and gazed for awhile steadfastly on the river. De Giac almost imagined, with great though secret alarm, that he perceived a tear trickle through his fingers into the wave.

"Why do you pause?—the fatted calf is killed, and will be overdone just now!" said De Giac, in a playful tone, that ill disguised the scorn and hatred in his soul.

"I am striving to recollect the bitterest reproaches my sire ever addressed to me—our fiercest jangles!" muttered the scholar.

"Did you not tell me that, on the occasion of your first interview with the Provost of Paris, your father called you an idle drone, made only to eat the honey of the honest bee; and that, when you answered (and very truly) that you did not make yourself for that nor any other purpose, he smote you! A blow is a blow, if even a father strikes!" said the mendicant.

"But I smote him in return!" replied the scholar.

"Certainly, certainly; 'tis the only gratitude one can show for such favours!" said De Giac, pleasantly. "But did he not soon after turn you out of your house under pretence that it belongs to him, and does he not persist in living, to your great detriment?"

"Aye!—he is a veritable old raven—but I cannot deny that I took a few florins from his strong box without mentioning the circumstance!" replied Perrinet, laughing. "The old miser would never have missed them if he had not a bad habit of counting his money, for he made no more use of it than the box in which he put it."

"You must forgive him—the old man, after all, pretends to be your father," said De Giac. "Perhaps he has some claim to the distinction, as your mother never went to court—though I have heard, indeed, that she was very devout, and the monks of St. Germain are jolly fellows."

"It is true—and I did never feel myself born to be an ironmonger, while I took to the church quite naturally!" said Perrinet. "Moreover, my mother dreamed, the night before I was born, that her baby came into the world with a papal tiara on his head!"

"Good!—a woman returns from a procession of bishops and abbots, dreams that her son shall prove a pope, and so he becomes a—what shall I call thee, my dear coadjutor?" said De Giac, coaxingly.

"A rogue,—by Cain's red beard! a rogue!" muttered Perrinet, with a gush of remorseful feeling even in his hard breast.

"Ay, but a rogue in ermine, with a sparkling shepherd's staff, methought, you desired to be?" returned De Giac, with a sardonic smile.

"Yes, truly!—Let me remember all Huéline said, and I shall on!" said the scholar, brightening up.

"When you are a bishop, did she not say she should h-

proud to have you for a confessor?" said De Giac. "Ah, I foresee that some bishoprics will be vacant, if all the Armagnac council get their deserts! Remember how you have been treated by the Armagnacs!—you barked for them, and they kicked you off like a dog that had bitten them. Remember your last appearance at the Provosty of Paris—and what redress your injuries received!"

"Let us on!" exclaimed Perrinet, with a ferocious gleam in the eyes. "I swore to Taneguy that I would take the justice he would not give, and he shall find if I know not how to keep my word!"

With these reflections enforced by the presence of his tempter, the scholar at length crossed the threshold of his father's house. The ironmongers of those times manufactured their goods as well as sold them, and Perrinet's pride was severely mortified that the lowliness of his origin should be thrust upon De Giac's notice in the substantial forms which filled the whole interior of the smithy. Bars of rusty iron, caldrons, scythes, bolts, and bars—every possible confusion of implement wrought by the rude art of the age in so hard a material—were around. Two forges blazed; at one of which Perrinet le Feron was busied, with the assistance of an apprentice, in fashioning reapers' hooks, while his old wife was engaged, with a whole posse of female friends, at the other, in preparing a substitute for the patriarch's fatted calf.

An enormously fat goose, ever the delight of Parisians, and a soup of the most attractive fragrance, broiled and boiled, the one on its spit, the other on its trivet, over the bright fire on the furnace.

Perrinet le Feron was a stern, thin-visaged old man, of middling stature, strongly knit, with an expression of gloom and care on his countenance that seemed habitual to it. The ingratitude and desertion of his only child, the fierce political strife in which he had taken a bold part, gave a tinge of misanthropy to his character, naturally severe and unbending. He had proved his devotion to the faction he had espoused in such perilous junctures, that no thought of winning him over ever entered the contemplation of the Burgundians. The haughtiest of the Armagnac nobles regarded not the mob of Paris with so much hatred and contempt as the rich ironmonger of the Petit Pont. It was chiefly by his energy and courage that the Bourgeoisie were roused to resist their rabble masters; and he occupied, as his reward, one of the most elevated positions his fellow-citizens could exalt him to.

In the depth of his stern heart it is probable that the old man cherished an affection for his only offspring which all Perrinet le Clerc's ill conduct had not eradicated. Else wherefore did he continue to toil and accumulate wealth, having no other relative to inherit it for whom he was thought to entertain the slightest kindness? It is true, he often dropped hints that he meant to leave what he possessed to found an hospital for decayed men-at-arms of the Armagnac party. But he took no steps to effect the purpose; and after Perrinet made a public retractation of his youthful error in following the party of Jean de Troye, by his harangue against the Duke of Burgundy, the father's animosity sensibly abated. The crafty mendicant found his way well smoothed by the circumstance; but, although Perrinet le Feron was secretly indignant at the treatment his son sustained on that occasion, he refused to make any effort in his behalf, or to acknowledge him as such, until he made a submission, which, when he turned him out of doors, he had solemnly vowed should precede his return.

And even now, when the old man's heart yearned with a paternal sentiment which all his outward coldness only concealed; when his thoughts were absorbed in a resolve to exert all the influence years of devotion had purchased to obtain redress from the Armagnacs, he behaved as if the most indifferent event in the world was about to happen. All the entreaties of his wife could not induce him to make any alteration in his usually sordid garb, with its shrivelled and patched leather apron. He was at work as usual, and his sweaty and grimy visage betrayed no secret of the feelings labouring within.

The mother of Perrinet was in exterior one of the very coarsest specimens of humanity. Parisian ugliness itself seldom has produced a more finished masterpiece; but the huge coarse frame overflowed with the milk of human tenderness and goodness of heart. A dreadful disease, against which medicine had then no remedy, had scarred her large visage; time and toil had obliterated most of the attractions that sex might once have conferred. But the benevolence and simplicity of her soul shone out of a thousand cracks and crannies in her unshapely form, and had even reconciled the fastidious De Giac to contemplate her without disgust. But Perrinet's strong complexion deepened, and shame and disdain were his prominent feelings when his poor old dam, with a scream of joy, threw down her basting-bowl, and came rolling like a tub on a tumbling wave to receive him. "Perrin

my son, my boy, my little baby!" exclaimed the old woman, clutching the tall scholar as well as she could in her arms, which her vast bosom and waist made considerably too small for the effort.

"Yea, mother, I am here," said Perrinet, after enduring rather than returning for some moments the fervent embraces, blessings, and sobs of his parent. "But where is my father?—Methought he promised to be at hand to restore to me that paternal benediction without which they tell me, and I am convinced, I cannot worthily enter on the duties of the holy offices whereto I shall shortly be summoned!"

While he said these words, the scholar's eye was fixed on his father, who rather over-acted the part he had assigned himself by pretending to be so earnestly engaged in his work that he took no notice of any arrival. He now ceased his hammering, which had been for some time to little purpose, and looked so sternly at the returned prodigal that De Giac was much alarmed. It was obvious that the young man's coldness, the methodical formula of his reasons for desiring a reconciliation, had reopened the wounds this meeting was ostensibly to close for ever.

"If thou needest my blessing only for that purpose, Perrinet, thou knowest I did never deem thee fitted for aught that had a savour of religion or virtue in it, least of all for the priesthood," he replied with slowness, as if he intended every word to cut to the quick—as it did! "Thy mother wanted thee home again—wherefore I know not, unless to keep her up of nights, wearing out her old eyes in looking for thee among the cinders at midnight, and wondering in what den of infamy they have at last cut thy throat! But be not afraid that I am in reality the old fool thou hast so oft reported me; for, wert thou Pope of Rome, I would make bold to tell thee, my son, on thy throne, that thy predecessor, Joan, was a fitter personage to occupy it!"

"Nay, Pierrot, Pierrot!" exclaimed the mother, degrading the husband from his affectionate diminutive of Perrinet. "Thou wilt ruin all!—Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst receive him as a father?"

"Doth he come as a son?" replied Perrinet le Feron.

There was a pause, during which the glance of the scholar encountered the sombre and intensely anxious eyes of his fellow-conspirator, and not in vain.

"Dear mother, blame not—my father has right and reason with him!" he said, crossing himself with a look of deep hu-

mility. "I have sinned before ye both, and am not worthy to be called your son; yet, for that I am so, I pray you, father, pardon and bless me! I need nothing more—the church provides amply for her poorest orphans."

Perrinet le Feron was evidently staggered, and it was with much surprise and strong emotion struggling in his tones, that he exclaimed, "Why now, Holy Cross! is this our son indeed? What! the knight's spear hath then beaten some sense into thee! But the constable shall do thee justice for that, or—well, thou art welcome, son, if in reality thou art repentant of all thine evil deeds!"

"Say that you pardon me, then!" said Perrinet le Clerc, sinking on both knees.

"Pardon thee, Perrinet! God and our Lady pardon thee as I do, and bless thee henceforth as thou shalt deserve!" said the old man, stooping to raise his returned prodigal—when both were suddenly thrust into one another's arms by the rejoicing mother. The women present all burst into tears and sobs as the father and son yielded to the tide, and embraced, while the old woman bubbled faster than her soup.

De Giac affected to be completely overcome by this tender scene,—and he knew that he was wanted elsewhere. He wiped his eyes, very superfluously, but repeatedly, declaring that, although the poorest beggar in Paris, he had a heart, and protested that he must needs retire and pray for the continuance of the reconciliation he had been so blessed as to bring about. De Giac had always represented himself, in the family of Perrinet, as a trader of Arras, reduced to beggary by the injustice of the Duke of Burgundy's fiscal officers, and therefore the superiority of his manners and discourse excited no suspicion. But he feared the possibility, and perceived a determination and smothered fierceness of resentment in his scholastic accomplice, which assured him his presence was superfluous. The benevolent mendicant refused all the pressing entreaties made to him to remain and share the happiness he had produced. "It is my hour of prayer, and every moment is precious on this side of things!" he exclaimed. "Besides, you must have much to say to each other! I will return another day to receive any thanks that may be due to me; but this I must say, that from this blessed moment methinks I see the keys of St. Peter hanging at the young man's girdle whom you have the joy to call your son!"

With these words, pronounced with emphasis, and perfectly

well understood by his clerical accomplice, and exchanging a glance of intelligence, De Giac retired.

Retracing his steps by a cautious roundabout, the Burgundian emissary hastened to the Boucherie, to carry the news thither, and ascertain that the other wheels of the conspiracy were in noiseless movement. He found the master-butchers already assembled, under pretext of arranging some means by which the inconvenience of attending the now distant shambles would be avoided. But all wore the armour used by the burgess militia of the walled cities of France, at least as much as could be carried without exciting observation, under their usual clothing. Weapons were liberally provided from the secret stores of the Caboches.

De Giac entered the chamber in which these personages were met, a large dark room in the centré of the Master-Chief's shambles, walled with black, carved walnut wood, and furnished with stools, for it was the usual place of meeting used by the confraternity of the Boucherie. In the middle of the room was a round table of massive wood, pierced by a single pillar that supported the roof, carved to represent an oak tree, while the ceiling above was fantastically and very elaborately wrought into branches and festoons of foliage. The Masters sat around this table, which was engraven with their charters, statutes, and bylaws, in bold Gothic letters, so that reference might be made to them with great facility. A large iron lamp illumined the circle, and displayed countenances animated by ferocious purposes and recollections, rekindled by the approach of the hour of vengeance and retaliation. De Giac, in fact, found them, instead of being engaged in consultation, refreshing one another's memories, with fierce garrulity, in the various wrongs and injuries they had sustained.

But it was the appearance of Huéline de Troye that chiefly attracted the emissary's attention. She was seated in the chair usually occupied by Simon Caboche, who, with his son, stood beside her. The fever of her spirits burned in her glowing cheeks, in the scarlet suffusions that visited her brows, in the restless, ravening, absent glances she cast from speaker to speaker as one interrupted the other in the eagerness of irritated reminiscences. But the courtier thought he had never seen her dressed with so much elaboration of toilette. The boddice of yellow satin which she wore relieved her somewhat brown but rosily clear and beautiful complexion. Her raven tresses were displayed in all their gloss and

profusion in contrast with some scarlet flowers she had twined with them, and the rounded fulness and elegance of the shoulders on which they floated were far from escaping the observation even of the absorbed politician. De Giac had not deemed that the betrothed of the Boucherie, rich as its owners were, possessed a robe so splendid as that of silver damask worn by Huéline, and which was in truth one of the numerous presents made to her by the Minstrels of the Hospital of St. Julian, in homage to talents from whence they derived so much advantage. Renaud secretly remarked, and with a vague misgiving he could not account for, that on this occasion Huéline wore nothing ever presented to her by himself or his sire.

Huéline started up the moment she perceived De Giac enter, as if she had been in eager expectation of his arrival. "Do you see, messire?—Our Huéline has only a woman's heart in her bosom, after all!" said Simon Caboche. "She shudders, and looks pale, and wishes all were well over, as if it were her wedding-day! We have had much ado to keep her from shutting her pretty eyelids, and fainting like a very woman!"

"Courage, my Huéline!—when I return, I will bring your father with me from his dungeon!" said Renaud.

"It is not fear—no, no, it is not fear!" replied Huéline, on whom these words seemed not to produce any salutary effect, for she grew perfectly colourless. "It is *not* fear, I tell ye! —why do ye gaze at me? But there is much and woeful treachery in this work! A father betrayed by his son! These are horrible times, Messire de Giac!"

"You, forget, Huéline!—that wicked old Perrinet le Feron was the first to fire your father's house!" said Simon, eagerly. "I saw it with mine own eyes!—Michael Cadenas, of the spice-merchants' guild, was the second!"

"And you throw shadows when we most need sunshine, maiden!" said De Giac, gently. "Which of ye hath not injuries to avenge on the Armagnacs which should make you deaf to every lisp of childish pity on any of them?"

"They forfeited my vineyard at Montl'hery, merely for sending Duke John word that some mortices were loose in the wall below the Bastille of St. Antoine!" said one of the Masters.

"You remember my nephew, Claude?—Was he not a blooming boy?—Some Armagnac women cut him to pieces in the square of the Grève as he was playing at bob-cherry below the scaffold, with its red drippings!" observed another.

"And hast thou nothing to avenge—nothing to retrieve, Simon?" said De Giac, with an anxious smile, for Simon glanced with a singularly despondent look at his now only son.

"Messire! I have but this one remaining—but I think only of Philibert and Lambert!" replied the Master-Chief, somewhat falteringly.

"I shall be in no danger, father! I will be among those who go to secure the person of the king. I want to see our handsome Armagnac knight again!" said Renaud.

"It is well; I have done my part—concert the rest among yourselves! The rest is for men—for sinews—the rest is—carnage and death!" said Huéline, with a dizzy glance. "I must retire and strive to rest—I must forget the dreadful business of this night—or I shall madden! Would that, like Gules, I were ignorant of it—could go to slumber with as calm a brain! Farewell, messires!—farewell, Sir Pierre!—let me not see any of your faces again until you come to tell me Paris is ours!"

"When we meet again, Huéline! this steel shall tell you whether I am so mere a boy as the Armagnac called me!" said Renaud, drawing his long and brilliantly sharp dagger.

"Let her depart; give me your hand, my bright ally!" said De Giac, apparently moved by Huéline's agitation; and he escorted her not only to the door of the guild-chamber, as it was called, but to the exterior, carefully closing it behind them. "Huéline!" he then said, in a whisper that quivered strangely for so experienced a talker, "the hour approaches that must make or unmake us both! Hear me! I am, like thee, of lowly birth—like thyself, of soaring ambition! Natures like mine love not oft, but when we love—albeit, we cannot speak it well—it is with a kind of madness! I love thee, Huéline! together we could rule the duke, rule France!—for thou art the sole woman, though the daughters of high-born nobles have shown that they could have forgiven me my mechanic birth, whom ever I felt that I could intrust with the only jewel of honour which I greatly value! . . . Thou knowest what I would say! What outward varnish of beauty or accomplishment could win her who rejected the seductions of the Welsh traitor? I will take care that wealth and power shall have nothing to offer thee of temptation! Thou lovest not Renaud—thou despisest the base clerk of the Sorbonne—
art ambitious—titles, splendour, power have charms for
All these may be thine, if thou wilt deign to become

the wife of Pierre de Giac! The wife, Huéline!—when thou canst become so with safety—when our instruments are used!"

While these words were uttered, a wild tide of triumph and hope rushed through Huéline's heart, for she knew that the plebeian noble was even more proud of his acquired rank, and apprehensive of any derogation from it, than Owen Tudor himself! Such a victory seemed like an assurance of the more brilliant one to which she aspired. But the effulgence of joy that beamed over her face only heightened the excess of De Giac's astonishment and mortification, when, yielding almost instantaneously to the disgust, and even horror, the crafty politician had always inspired her with, she snatched her hand away from his lips, and in a few words, brief, decisive, energetic, as a thunderclap, refused his offer, and left him standing like a statue—alone.

It took De Giac several minutes to recover his composure; but he succeeded, and returned with apparently perfect calmness to the company he had left.

The Masters of the Grande Boucherie were already so athirst for vengeance, and the hope of winning back their lucrative privileges, that De Giac's chief difficulty lay in moderating their zeal. The minor details of the insurrection were now to be arranged—every part exactly planned. It was agreed that, at midnight, the Masters were to have their men mustered, with the weapons of their trade in hand, from all the recesses of the shambles. The gates could be closed without suspicion at that hour, and no possibility of betrayal would remain. Simon Caboche was to be in readiness to take the command, according to the dignity of his office; De Giac himself was to hasten to a rendezvous which he had appointed with the executioner Capeluche, the king of the rogues of Paris, who was to have his subjects well prepared, and in part assembled, to witness the mutilation of some robbers, whom, by way of variety, it pleased him to execute at midnight in the Place de Grève, under a pretext that the crowds that came to these exhibitions in daylight were dangerously numerous. He deceived even the wily provost with this excuse, more especially as the spectacle, from its singular cruelty, was likely to prove very attractive. The convicts were to have their hands and feet struck off, and branded, prior to being hung. Meanwhile De Giac proposed that Renaud Caboche, with a dozen or so of sturdy fellows of the trade, should steal singly towards the Gate of St. Germain, and lie in ambush about it, to be ready to overpower any resistance that might

be offered by the warder, when Perrinet arrived with the keys to admit the Burgundian horsemen.

But Simon Caboche objected to this last proposition. With all the savage recklessness of his own life, he trembled for the safety of his son, his sole heir. He declared he would undertake this dangerous office himself, and leave Renaud to represent him in the Boucherie.

"It is impossible—the rabble must see your wildwolf locks, hear your roar, that silences the bulls in their stalls!" replied De Giac. "Else they will not know or believe that they are once more masters in Paris; but, if Renaud is afraid, we will find another for the office, and he can stay to comfort his betrothed!"

These words sufficed to excite the resolution of the young butcher, who was obstinate as his sire was violent; and, finally, Simon was obliged to submit, and remained, though with great surliness and discontent, alone in the Boucherie. It was even thought advisable that he should order his slaughter-houses to be closed, and retire as usual to rest, for the eyes and suspicions of the Armagnacs were chiefly on the house of the Master-Chief.

All was soon quiet in the Boucherie. It was determined that the lights and fires should be extinguished at the usual hour, and that the passage of the Armagnac patrol from the Grand Châtelet should be awaited ere the conspiring multitude glided from their secret recesses. Until, then, at twelve at night, the Boucherie was not permitted to close its massive gates, by a special edict promulgated since Owen Tudor left its hospitable precincts.

The very sky seemed of the complot. Never was there a night of greater beauty and tranquillity in the heavens than this of the 28th of May, 1418. And yet the moon continued behind a dark and stationary cloud, as if for the purpose of veiling whatever happened below. The approach of the hour that was to herald events so terrible was indeed as unattended by portents as the most ordinary which ever sounded on the clock of time. Unless that was one, afterwards averred to have been witnessed by an aged monk, who was returning home to his monastery, past the ruins of the house of Jean de Troye, who certified that he perceived a glittering figure gliding amidst dark masses of crumbling masonry, through one of the blackened casements, near the top of the whole pile, where it was certain that nothing human could ever have climbed! This apparition was visible by some glare that for

a moment shone on it from above, and, coupled with the fact that the house belonged to a suspected necromancer and certain scoffer, convinced the monk that it was a warning which he ought to have taken in some other manner than by crossing himself and muttering a paternoster in bad Latin.

At midnight the Lieutenant of the Châtelet rode merrily through the Boucherie, with a clattering troop of men-at-arms. If aught were suspicious, it was the very absence of any cause for such a sentiment—the entire tranquillity of the streets, the universal darkness of the casements! But the joyous functionary, Messire Remonnet de la Guerre, was occupied with another idea. It had pleased the potent Lord de la Trimouille to accompany him as a volunteer on his rounds this night—so magnificently clad, that Remonnet, who was a poor soldier of fortune, could think of little but his honourable companion's splendour. Moreover, La Trimouille had confided to him that he had made great progress in the esteem of the noted minstreless of the Boucherie; and that she longed for some opportunity of seeing him, in spite of her jealous relatives' precautions. He therefore wished the lieutenant to guard certain musicians whom he had brought with him, while they played some music, which he thought would be sure to arrest her attention. Remonnet was glad of any opportunity to insult the Burgundians and oblige the Dauphin's favourite.

Consequently, to the great astonishment of Simon Caboche, and, in fact, of the whole Boucherie, an harmonious concert of various instruments filled that dark and sultry atmosphere of conspiracy with sweet sounds. During the performance, the giver of the entertainment placed himself prominently forward, and continued to gaze with longing attention at the house of the terrible Master-Chief; but without producing any other effect, than convincing its inhabitants that the Armagnacs were utterly unsuspicious, since they thought the time convenient for such mockeries!

The Lieutenant of the Châtelet was at length compelled to proceed on his rounds; and La Trimouille, though much disappointed, dared no longer remain without his escort. He was certainly very far from suspecting that he had added the charms of a tender and love-lorn harmony to the magic eloquence with which Huéline was then endeavouring, gradually and remotely, to insinuate some inklings of her projects in broken snatches of light on her lover—that it might not come at last in too sudden and broad a blaze!

The Armagnac captain could not bear to leave the Boucherie without some mark of contempt. He proceeded on his way, bursting into a rough camp song, which was echoed in disorderly chorus by his soldiery:—

> "Down, down, down, in the dust;
> Down, false Burgundy!
> Blood for blood; we will and must
> John's blackest heart-stream see!"

Remonnet de la Guerre and his troop, on their return, passed a man in the garb of a scholar of the Sorbonne, who was hurrying along with singular rapidity across the square of the Châtelet. The patrol stopped him, or rather he ran upon them in his blind haste.

"Ah, it is a good Armagnac—it is Perrinet le Clerc!" said the lieutenant, good-humouredly. "Master scholar, are you out courting so late—or have you killed your man, that you are hurrying towards St. Jacques, and look so pale and frothy at the lips?"

"I have done no hurt!—what is the matter in the Boucherie?" said the scholar, so bewilderedly that it needed but a stern glance to have thrown him on his knees to divulge the whole conspiracy.

"Be not afraid—nothing happens there, but a sweet nightingale I wot of comes and sings it in my ear!" said La Trimouille, affectedly. "All will be known some day—and it will be seen at last to whose vigilance we are indebted for the tranquillity we enjoy!"

He moved on with this oracular intimation! and Perrinet le Clerc, taking courage from the courtier's ignorant confidence, pretended that he thought he heard a cry of "Fire!" from the Boucherie, and was running to enjoy the spectacle. He proceeded at a more sober pace, until the torches of the patrol vanished out of sight, when he again took to his heels, and entered the Boucherie at the moment when the gates were closed; and, as if by magic, a silent, but multitudinous motion, stirred its whole interior.

Perrinet had the pass-word and shibboleth of the initiated —"The True Cross!"—in allusion to the Burgundian cross of St. Antony. He speedily made his way to Simon's house, and found the Master-Chief watching his butchers emerge and collect from the various vaults and inclosures in which he had ordered them to conceal themselves, under pretence of a midnight slaughter, to elude the prohibition upon them.

But the tidings of the aghast scholar seemed likely to render every preparation in vain. Simon Caboche, who had no dependence on himself for anything but blows, could only resolve, in his utter consternation, on one expedient—and that was to seek counsel from Huéline.

"She will excuse ceremony at this mortal pass! Let us to her chamber, scholar!" he exclaimed; and snatching up a torch, which had literally hidden its light under a bushel, he mounted to the apartment containing the wrecks indeed of Jean de Troye!

CHAPTER XXII.

AN ANCIENT INSURRECTION OF PARIS.

"HUELINE! Huéline! daughter, be not afraid! Dost thou not know my voice? Open the door, and speak with us!" said the Master-Chief of the Boucherie, luckily remembering that he was about to take the scholar of the Sorbonne into the chamber of his son's betrothed, and pausing on the threshold.

The heart of Huéline de Troye stood still as if with the sudden touch of death! For some time she had been startled with vague sounds which all her consciousness could not account for—murmurs of conversation, footsteps, the gleam of a torch through a latch-hole, at the opening door—that voice! The hell of the moment more than balanced all the guilty happiness of the hours that had passed! But her first thought and fear were not for herself, but for Owen Tudor. Simultaneously with the conviction that a horrible fate awaited him, she resolved to share it. "We are lost—it is Caboche!" she murmured. "But it is not ill—since we die together!"

Brave as Owen undoubtedly was, the words thrilled to his heart with perhaps the first deep sensation of fear that ever visited it. The image of the dreadful butcher maddening over his old rancours and this crowning revelation, surrounded by his gory myrmidons, arose almost visually to his gaze, but, luckily, not physically! He was endeavouring with strong assurances, which he himself for the time believed, of unaltered and unalterable love, to dispel the vague suspicions and fears hinted by Huéline, when Death himself seemed to summon him in the tones of Simon Caboche.

"I will defend thee to the last!—Ah, why wouldst thou not let me depart?" he said, and his sword gleamed in the light

of Caboche's torch at the chink of the door, and he snatched the light buckler he usually carried, with the resolve of a valiant desperation.

"Huéline, daughter, chuck!—answer us; it is I, Caboche, the Master-Chief of the Boucherie!" said Simon, in the most considerate and gentle tones. "Dost thou sleep so soundly at such a season? The old Armagnac is too cunning for us—here is Perrinet, without the keys!"

"Peace, peace, we are not yet all lost—be hushed as the death I fear only for thee!" whispered Huéline. "Dear godfather! what is the matter?—Stir not, breathe not, if you would not give us both to death—me to worse than death!—Simon, I hear you; I am at the door; do not enter, but speak!"

"Was there ever such a suspicious old rogue as Perrinet le Feron? We must do it all ourselves, or put it off to the day of judgment," returned the Master-Chief.

"What hath chanced? Who is the stranger with you?" gasped Huéline.

"I am no stranger, dear demoiselle! I am Perrinet le Clerc!" said Caboche's companion, in tones recognised by more listeners than the one he addressed. "An accursed fortune attends me ever, and I have failed! The keys of the gate of St. Germain are at this instant safely lodged beneath my father's pillow, on the Petit Pont."

"You have failed, sieur! where failure is utter destruction!" exclaimed Huéline, in whose bosom the first agony of terror was succeeded by one of absorbing disappointment.

"But everything else is in readiness! said Caboche, eagerly. "We are here in the Boucherie, above four hundred stout Burgundians, not ill-armed, considering that they left us only the things we could hide and what we make meat withal! Let us raise the duke's cry, march boldly to the Gate of St. Germain, where L'Isle Adam and his eight hundred riders must now be, burst them open, and battle it out with the Armagnacs in the streets!"

"It were madness—all depends on a surprise; we should be but hacked to pieces in vain!" replied Huéline distractedly. "The two Châtelets cannot be stormed by undisciplined men, armed with pole-axes! and a hundred times our force could not hope to cross the river against the roused Armagnacs. But what has happened? Speak low."

"What is the fear, Huéline? we can all go quietly to our beds again!" said the scholar, quiveringly.

"Lest our partisans should hear below, and take panic!"

said Huéline; and then, ashamed of betraying, by this cowardly and useless attempt, her consciousness of the deep turpitude involved in Perrinet's share in the conspiracy, she added, "Speak then as loud as you will! Since all must be known, let the fair motive pardon the ill deed!"

But even her apprehensions were surpassed by the effect of the scholar's tidings on the unseen auditor. With the hope of softening her anger at the disappointment, Perrinet introduced his news by detailing the circumstances of his reception, and the difficulty he experienced in suppressing all feelings of natural compunction; in resolving to persevere in his purpose. How patiently he had endured all the sour reflections of his father, the tedious congratulations of his mother's friends, who flocked in to stare at the returned prodigal. How, when the hour for fastening the gates arrived, he volunteered in a most filial manner to set the ward and bring back the keys of St. Germain; and how his father, drily and suspiciously, replied that, as long as he was the quartenier of the district, and able to move one leg past the other, he would trust so important a duty to no one living, not even of tried steadiness and sobriety! How, when the old man returned, Perrinet le Clerc learned, for the first time, that, owing to the increased jealousies and dangers of the time, his father no longer considered the keys safe where he deposited his own most precious effects, but slept with them nightly under his pillow! Even after this discovery, Perrinet was obliged to pretend to retire to rest, and wait until he imagined his parents were in reality plunged in repose, ere he dared unbar the doors and sally forth to inform his friends of the discomfiture.

For some moments Huéline herself thought that all was lost, considering who overheard the communication, and its nature. She distinguished the vehement beating of Owen's heart; she almost felt the strong shudders that ran over his frame!

"And did you find it impossible, did you make no attempt —to enter your father's chamber?" she said, hesitatingly.

"The passage to his sleeping-chamber is secured by a door of the strongest oak, triple-bolted and barred! Have I not oft told you how fearful he is of losing his gold?" muttered Perrinet.

"But, since you left the causeway door open, could not a party of us steal thither and take the keys by force? No oak can resist my axe!" said Caboche.

"Murder the father by the son! No, Caboche, we must

be human, or humanity will disown us!" said Huéline. "Remember, too, that the whole quarter of St. Germain is Armagnac! All were equally lost that way!—but all is not lost!" she continued, with an inspiration of her subtle and now desperate genius. "I know a better key than your axes into the chamber of Le Feron!—Doats he not on his wealth—do not murderers and robbers abound in Paris? Let Perrinet return! let him steal as quietly as may be back to his chamber, and raise a cry of 'Thieves and murder!' This will bring the old pair to his aid, in confusion, in terror, in haste! The keys will be left behind under the pillow; and in the darkness, Perrinet, canst thou not glide into thy father's chamber and remove them? A fearful dream will excuse thine outcry; they will return unsuspiciously to rest! and then, Perrinet, fly to the gate of St. Germain, and victory and Paris are ours!"

Huéline spoke in as low a tone as could be audible to those whom she addressed; but she knew that all was overheard by a breathless listener from whom she would almost have resigned life to conceal it, so double-dyed, even in her own sight, was the remorseless treachery involved.

"It shall be!—I will follow at no great distance, in case of the worst!" shouted Caboche.

"No, no; you shall not stir from the Boucherie! a single babbler may ruin all still!" exclaimed Huéline. "Let every outlet be guarded—our own house surrounded in every direction—the Val de Misère—above all, the great street of St. Jacques—sentineled and guarded as if against the escape of something invisible! If Perrinet fails—if we hear no further news from him—yes, we must on! We are all desperate now—and must either win or lose all!—Let Capeluche be summoned with his mob!—Perchance we may find a leader whose appearance and adhesion will fire the multitude with enthusiasm—dismay the Armagnacs with fears of treason! Hasten, Perrinet, hasten!—and nothing is lost, but all is won!"

Perrinet was evidently so confused and agitated, that but for the whirlwind-like impetuosity of these words, and the sway Huéline had acquired over him, he might have hesitated—or not have known what he was to do or obey, if Caboche had not clutched him round the neck, and hurried him off, repeating his instructions with deafening iteration, until his voice became inaudible in the distance.

And then Huéline turned—slowly, hesitatingly, almost

cringingly—to her lover. Their eyes met in the first glimpse of moonlight that had shone out hitherto; and the surprise, the wrath, the madness flaming in Owen's, terrified even Huéline so much that she stood, without daring to utter a word, like a convicted criminal before a merciless judge!

Owen was in truth bewildered as if in a disordered dream. All that he clearly understood was that he—the favourite of the Armagnac court, who built such vasty hopes on its stability—was in the midst of a Burgundian insurrection ready to overwhelm it in utter ruin! That the enemy he most despised and hated was the friend and confidant of the woman who pretended to such unbounded affection for himself—the syren who had lured him into her power!

Huéline felt the necessity of attempting to break the terrible train of ideas which she knew must be traversing his mind. "Pardon, dearest love!" she said, in tones of almost abject humility; "I told thee truly when I said that only in the bosom of danger is there safety for us—for thee! Else dost thou deem that even I—wooer as I am!—that I dared . . . have mercy on me and speak! Within an hour Paris will be in the hands of the Burgundians! Look below—thou wilt see the Boucherie swarming with desperate men! Eight hundred of the most valiant men-at-arms of Picardy are now at the gates of St. Germain! Your constable suspects no danger—his Armagnacs are buried in sleep and security! How could I save thee, but thus?"

"Traitress! thou hast not saved me! Thou hast brought me to thy shambles more certainly to destroy me!" exclaimed Owen, grinding his teeth like a young lion caught in the toils.

"Nay, dearest Owen!—thou canst not believe it, remembering how I have loved thee!—I desire only to make thee the most glorious knight of France!" said Huéline. "I love thee solely—thee altogether—thee beyond all things, existence, here and hereafter. Thou hast sworn to be mine for ever—and mine thou art! What was once but a vague imagining is now an actual thing! Consent to become our leader—join the Burgundian knights on their entry in this surcoat which with mine own hands I have embroidered for thee with Burgund blazonings—and thine own courage and my love shall make thee master of Paris! Else, prepare to perish with the rest—a victim of the cruelty and hatred of the Caboches—of the Beggar of the Parvis—of the miserable Perrinet himself!"

be human, or [illegible] for every word of this temptation acted
"Remember, t[illegible] the designs of the speaker. Every
Armagnac! [illegible] gain suggested some splendid contrast
lost!" she co[illegible] included. The indignation of the
now desperat[illegible] of the lover, the rival, the man—all
into the chan[illegible] and rage with which he per-
—do not mu[illegible] he was entrapped! The conduct of
rinet return[illegible] him stripped of all the dazzling
chamber, [illegible] veiled its guilt both to herself and
will bring [illegible]
haste! [illegible] deem that I will debase myself, my mother's
in the [illegible] name—by wedding the—what shall I
father's [illegible] priest, mine enemy?—for well I know how
excuse [illegible] to thy purposes! Do not dream it! Do
and t[illegible] I will betray the noble faith put in me, to be-
and [illegible] of a vile populace! Call up your rabble! Kill
[illegible] but I will die shouting, 'Vive Armagnac!' Call
wh[illegible] aid, for I will return the way I came, and at
by [illegible] as a knight and noble should!"
res[illegible]—thou art mad—it is impossible—all the outlets
si[illegible]!" said Huéline, springing forward and seizing
[illegible] with the strength of despair. "Or, if thou wilt give
t[illegible] recompense to all my love, let it be with thine own
[illegible]! Spare me at least the agony of my shame—of mine
[illegible] dishonour—let them find me dead, and let the grave
[illegible] my guilt, from human eyes at least!"
"Accursed sorceress! unwreathe me! O, my father!—
[illegible] seeing Glendower!—well did ye warn me, but in vain!"
groaned the captive, tearing himself violently from her arms,
yet pausing on the dreadful alternative thus presented—not,
indeed, on the idea of destroying Huéline by his own hand,
but the dangers to which the detection of himself must ex-
pose her.

"Ha!—do not remind me that I, too, have a father!" said Huéline, wildly. "Remember, knight, I am but what thou hast made me! But, happen what will else, thou shalt not depart!"

"Why wouldst thou detain me? I hate, I abhor thee now!—I will rather perish a thousand times than share in thine horrible conspiracy!" said the infuriated knight. "I alone run the hazard!—let me die, if it must be, beneath the knives of the Cabochiens; but let me die with honour!"

"With honour!—what sound is this thou usest so hollowly?" returned Huéline. "Speak the truth, and own that thy

loyalty is only another name for a treason of thine own! The favour of a madman has rendered thee mad too!—Confess it, most faithful knight!—dost thou not hope to accomplish thy prophecies by adherence to the cause of those wise councillors who are, no doubt, prepared to wed the daughter of France—the betrothed of England—to a fugitive rebel of the crown of Henry V.?"

The words burst irresistibly from the lips of the jealous minstreless, but no allusion more opposed to her purposes could have been made. It convinced Owen that his infidelity was detected, and stirred all his master passions to their depths.

"A vassal!—a vassal of the crown of England; I that was about to rend the diadem of mine ancestors from its stolen treasuries!" he exclaimed. "Vile witch! thou hast conspired with the fiends that guard them—but in vain! Destiny is mightier than all your spells! I fear not your knives, your axes! The betrothed of England shall be the bride of Wales—or the stars shall fall from their spheres!—Let me pass, or——"

"Thou shalt not pass—to destruction!—from me—to Catherine of France!" returned Huéline, throwing herself in frantic entreaty on his neck. Owen repulsed her with violence; still she clung to him as if to detain him by the force of her despair. But his fury had now passed all bounds, and, disengaging himself from her with a terrific effort that cast her senseless on the floor, Owen rushed to the casement portal which admitted to the terraces of Jean de Troye. In another instant he had darted over the intervening roofs, and found himself close on the ruins of the house once occupied by the unfortunate demagogue! Here he paused to observe—to listen if he was pursued, and to ascertain if he might descend unheeded into the street of St. Jacques below.

The sound of a multitude densely gathering became more distinctly audible, though accomplished with every effort to preserve the silence essential to the meditated surprise. It was like the distant hum of bees swarming round their hives on a calm summer evening, or the rustle of a remote wood. The Parisians, by nature so garrulous and vivacious, can be silent when mischief is at work. From the point he had reached, Owen overlooked the whole inclosure of the Boucherie, with its intricate network of slaughterhouses and stalls. The moon had returned into her cloud, and only the chance gleam of some deadly weapon on the ground revealed

the fact, that bodies of the conspirators covered almost the whole interior space. The agitated stir of these masses, whispering and communicating intelligence, resembled the movement of waves in the dark, when a creeping storm-wind ruffles the surface of the sea.

During the breathless moments of this survey, Owen's thoughts wandered distractedly over many projects, by which it seemed to him it was yet possible that the Burgundian conspiracy might be foiled, or chances that might yet cause it to fail. It was not unlikely that Perrinet le Clerc had taken fright, and abandoned his task; and, if he persevered in it, numerous circumstances might occur to nullify his treachery.

The Burgundians might disperse in disappointment; or, if they made an open attack, Owen was comforted by remembering the great strength of the Hostel of St. Pol, and of the other fortresses of Paris in possession of the Armagnacs. The surprisal of the Grand Châtelet was essential to the views of the conspirators, as it commanded the passage of the river, and, if maintained by the Armagnacs, might, even in the event of Perrinet's success, continue to isolate the two parties of the populace and the knights of L'Isle Adam, under whose protection only could they obtain the weapons necessary to render them formidable! The necessity of warning the provost with all possible speed—the conviction that Paris might still be preserved by this means—struck Owen almost instantaneously, and dictated the course he determined to take, without delay, and at whatever risk. But, just as he turned to enter the ruins of the house of Jean de Troye, he heard a voice that, distant, wild, ear-piercing as it was, he knew to be the voice of Huéline de Troye, calling to the leaders in the shambles below her windows, "On to the Châtelet, Simon!—lose not an instant!"

The words were echoed in the Boucherie by the terrible tones of Simon Caboche. "On to the Châtelet!"—And "ON TO THE CHATELET!" pealed over the whole interior of the Boucherie; and, as if by magic, it suddenly blazed up with torches, and became animated with a formidable multitude. The devoted clients of Simon Caboche, whose crimson frieze dresses gave the hue of blood to the whole movement, emerged from the inclosures and slaughterhouses in every direction, brandishing the terrible weapons of their trade—poleaxes, knives, choppers, and the huge maces used to stun the larger animals. In the centre of the open space of the Boucherie, Simon Caboche, in his full costume of Master-Chief, and sur-

rounded by the other Masters, also in their proper insignia, showed himself conspicuously elevated on a vast block, and apparently marshalling his dreadful bands with an enormous steel, the ensign of his dignity.

Owen felt that it was now indeed the struggle of his destiny with the disastrous influence against which his prophecies had vainly warned him. Not an instant was to be lost; and he turned from the spectacle in the Boucherie, to enter the crumbling mass of the house of Jean de Troye. The fire of the Armagnacs had not ill done its work, but by some chance, or the density of the material, a narrow winding staircase remained almost perfect, save that its bannisters were partly consumed, and many of the steps were little more than crumbling charcoal. A superstitious thought entered the mind of the Welsh knight, as he endeavoured to grope his way—no longer guided by a loving torch—that the very ruins of the Parisian demagogue's abode were in conspiracy against him, for the steps seemed to yield beneath his feet, and the things he grasped, to give way, as if they were merely heaps of black sand. Once or twice he fell down a considerable height, and was severely bruised. It was like a flight in a dreadful dream; and Owen himself scarcely knew how he had accomplished it, when he found himself at last on the basement floor. Even then, some stones, loosened by his contact, seemed inclined to make a last effort at his destruction, and fell about him as he made his passage to the exterior.

He was now in the great street of St. Jacques, out of the Boucherie, and standing in the shadow of the large house once occupied by Nicholas Flamel, at the corner of the street of the Notaries. Everything in this part was tranquil; the agitation of the shambles passed not their high walls. But Owen remembered the way from the Boucherie through the Val de Misère to the square of the Châtelet, and doubted not that the butchers had taken it. He was ignorant whether there was any means of reaching the fortress from the street of St. Jacques, or, at all events, without incurring a ruinous delay. And he also recollected that, in the explanation of the species of map visible from her lofty chambers, Huéline showed him how the Cemetery of the Innocents was connected with the Val de Misère by some narrow streets. Thence he thought he could easily make his way to the Grand Châtelet; he was one, and the movements of a multitude must necessarily be much slower.

Revived by the hope, he proceeded with extraordinary rapidity up the street of the Notaries, tenanted by so many busy-brained denizens, but now wrapped in silence and desertion. Then he found himself in the Cemetery of the Innocents, an inclosure exactly answering the description given of it by Huéline, in the part occupied by the shops and tombs. Owen had, however, emerged in some cloisters, which, so far, had not shared this profanation, and were painted all round with the celebrated "Danse Macabre," or "Dance of Death." The artists' names are unknown, but they were worthy to be the predecessors of Hans Holbein in the grotesque terror of the spectacles delineated. And these ghastly satires on the vanity of human existence, illuminated by the glimmer of lamps from the shrines of the saints, guardians of the dead, at irregular intervals, struck Owen as if typifying the approaching destruction! Still he was obliged to proceed at hap-hazard, and it was only by chance that he fell into the right exit, and got into the windings of the Val de Misère.

Owen concealed his corselet and helmet—the only armour he wore—as much as possible under his mantle; for he soon discovered that, however darkly and silently, the whole district was in movement and agitation; crawling from loathsome cellars and vaults, gliding singly or in long files from apparently impassably narrow alleys, came the terrible denizens of this rankling quarter. A compact of deadly stillness seemed universally made, or at least was observed. Only the fierce gleams interchanged by men's eyes denoted their cognizance of each other's purpose, and common determination. The majority were armed but with the instruments of their various trades, or with heavy staves, which, in hands so desperate, were likely to prove much more dangerous weapons than they seemed.

In the general agitation and movement, Owen's progress was but little observed, though he dared not challenge attention by continuing it at his first rapid pace. Nevertheless, he soon gained the head of the stream, and entered the square of the Châtelet, where a glance convinced him he had arrived too late.

All the entrances into the square were guarded by detachments of the butchers and the rabble, who only suffered people to enter, but allowed no one to depart, from the scene of action. The Cabochiens, meanwhile, headed by Simon himself, had taken possession of all the approaches to the

fortress, and were engaged in rending the strong gates from their hinges, so as to prevent the possibility of their being closed against their friends on the opposite shore of the river. No resistance appeared to be made by the garrison. The ready and valiant provost, in whose courage Owen placed so much reliance, nowhere appeared. A single affrighted individual seemed endeavouring to reason with the mob from a window of the tower above the gateway; but his remonstrances only produced shouts of laughter and derision.

Pushing his way with difficulty through the tumultuous crowd that flooded the square of the fortress, Owen approached so near that he distinctly recognized, in the pallid and gesticulating orator over the gateway, the Lord de la Trimouille! The circumstance, and the words he uttered, convinced Owen that the hopes he had cherished of resistance at this point, were in vain. "Messires! honest men of Paris! —my good fellows!—I do assure you, upon my life, I am here by mere accident! I am the Lord de la Trimouille—a friend and servant of my lord the dauphin—ye would not harm me! —I am here, not to do ye any mischief, but to sup with Messire Remonnet de la Guerre, your kind lieutenant—who is so drunk that he cannot speak with you, to learn your pleasure! As for Messire Tanneguy Duchâtel, who, I own, governs Paris too rigidly—if ye want to do any vengeance on him, alas, I can faithfully assure you he is not here. He is at the Bastille of St. Antoine, for he has been appointed master of the ordnance, against all good advice! In our Lady's name, go and seek him there!"

"Coward!" yelled a voice from the crowd; "collect your archers and men-at-arms—descend and disperse this rabble—who will not, and can not, withstand one valiant effort!"

Instantly arose a dreadful shout among the multitude of "An Armagnac! an Armagnac!" But the darkness and confusion covered Owen's whereabouts, more especially as, at this moment, the gates of the Grand Châtelet fell with a tremendous crash under the last strokes of a hundred mallets; and the populace, still headed by the Masters of the Boucherie, rolled on to complete the communication with their expected friends by a similar seizure of the Petit Châtelet, which defended the opposite extremity of the bridge, and the entrance to the Isle of the City.

But the Welsh knight was not yet exhausted in his fervid imaginings. It was probable that the Petit Châtelet would at least offer the inert resistance of its stronger brother, ar

thus delay, for a period, the rush of the populace. Perrinet le Clerc had scarcely yet had time to reach his father's house, on the Petit Pont, and certainly not to accomplish his undertaking, by opening the gates of St. Germain. Owen remembered Huéline's words—that the whole district was Armagnac—and the thought darted into his mind, that, if he could gain the southern shore of the river some little time before the Cabochiens, he might be enabled to raise it in resistance—possibly might even overtake and baffle his ancient foe!

To cross the river in the train of the insurrectionary movement would, of course, have been useless. But Owen was a skilful swimmer, and the hardy habits of his youth made him indifferent to the dangers of currents and tides. He knew that some of the neighbouring alleys must conduct to the shore; and, with the decision and impetus of his character, he took the first that presented itself that appeared to slope downward, and found, indeed, after traversing a foul lane of mud huts, abounding in every species of filth, that the Seine flowed at its terminus.

Up and down, a perfect tranquillity seemed to sway both shores of the river. Far to his right Owen perceived the black, circular, solitary mass of the Tower of Nesle—on the left, the advance of the insurgents over the bridge of the Châtelet was distinguishable only by the pattering of innumerable feet, within the street formed by the houses built on it. In front, the crowded masses of the Isle of the City, presided over by the towers of Notre Dame, concealed the southern shore of the river.

Owen was familiar with the way to St. Germain from the Isle; it passed over the Petit Pont; and, on reflection, he thought it would be best for him to cross thither, and not the whole breadth of the river, as he had at first intended. It was possible, he still imagined, that he might arrive in time to alarm Perrinet le Feron against the projects of his treacherous son. He recollected the sign of the Bouquet de Fer, which Huéline had pointed out to him playfully, as a place where he ought to visit, to receive the thanks of its owner for the chastisement administered to his licentious prodigal. To form and execute a resolution were almost simultaneous acts with Owen Tudor.

The muddy waters of the Seine were not an agreeable bath to a swimmer who had acquired his art in the bright impetuous streams of his native torrents, or the deep translucent waves of the sea of Arvon. But they inspired no fear, for

Owen scarcely took the precaution to fasten his mantle tightly around him, before he plunged into the river, and commenced his navigation. The towers of Notre Dame instantly seemed to dip to the level of the water, but the dark mass of the city continued to guide him. Owen was making rapid way when he suddenly came in contact with a passenger coming apparently in the contrary direction. The glance they exchanged was only momentary, but in it he perceived that he had run full shock against an enormous wolf, breasting its course through the stream! He had little doubt that this was the famous Courtand; but fortunately the quadruped appeared to have as hurried business as his human encounterer, and passed on without offering any obstruction.

The Welsh adventurer liked not the omen, but he also pushed forward with unabated eagerness, and landed safely on the Isle. This heart of Paris was indeed perfectly tranquil, despite the violent palpitation of its main artery; and Owen almost imagined he must be dreaming too, when he ran through its silent and utterly deserted streets. He knew that the Isle was suspected of a strong leaning to the Burgundian cause, and he therefore made no attempt to give any alarm, but pursued his way, streaming and breathless, to the Petit Pont.

The Bouquet de Fer was a conspicuous object from all points of approach to the bridge, and its appearance renewed Owen's eagerness of hope. He might almost be said to fly to the spot; and now, for the first time, he gave expression to the tumultuous agitation of his mind in the thundering peal he directed against the door of Perrinet le Feron, and the inarticulate but terrible outcries with which he strove to rouse his attention. The whole neighbourhood resounded with the noise, and the quartenier himself instantly made his appearance at one of the windows above.

"What is the matter?—Is there a fire, or have our thieves come again in good earnest?" cried the old man in a voice that was at once peevish and alarmed. The words were almost a deathblow to Owen's hopes.

"Awake, quartenier! — you are betrayed, your son has betrayed you—the Burgundians are storming the Châtelets!" he shouted. "Come forth, and raise your quarter!—We may yet baffle their traitorous attempts! To arms, in the name of the king and of the Constable d'Armagnac!"

"What drunkard art thou?" said a quaggy female voice behind the quartenier. "Betrayed by our son, whom we

but this very night welcomed home to our arms! Madman, begone!"

"Search if you have the keys of St. Germain under your pillow, quartenier!" cried Owen, in agony. "If not, I swear it, your son has stolen them to admit the Burgundians!"

"Do not trouble at all in the matter, husband!—this man is both drunk and mad!" said the mother of Perrinet le Clerc. But his less believing sire ran back into the room, and reappeared in a few moments, exclaiming, "They are gone!—how can this be? Stranger, how know you this?"

"Believe me and make no farther question, but raise all the aid you may, and follow to the gate of St. Germain! It may not yet be too late to prevent the traitor's purpose! Search, and you will find him gone—gone to admit the Burgundians!" and Owen hastened on over the Petit Pont, without paying any farther attention to the distracted cries and questionings of the old man. He hoped that Perrinet le Clerc had not the start of him by many minutes; and, although it was probable he would proceed on his guilty errand with all possible despatch, the rapid pace of his pursuer might yet retrieve the distance so at least as to give an alarm to the warders in time.

Owen Tudor could chase the deer on foot, and weary out its speed, but never had he followed at so breathless a speed as now. Every motive that can animate to exertion was astir in his heart. The enemy he hated was before him—the ruin of his friends and of his loftiest hopes was to be prevented. After a short transit, short at least in point of time, his perseverance was rewarded. A dark figure, in the habit of the Sorbonne, swept round the opposite extremity of one of the streets he entered, and Owen had no doubt that it was the object of his pursuit. The hope gave him wings; and he emerged in an open space of the suburb of St. Germain that intervened to its lofty wall and gate, before Perrinet, who stumbled repeatedly over some rubbish and tiles on the way, was more than half across. Then, raising a shout which he intended should put the guardians of the gate on the alert, Owen drew his dagger and sprang forward. A few more strides and leaps would have placed him beside his enemy, when suddenly, as if by a spontaneous eruption of the earth, about a score of men, habited as butchers, and well armed, interposed. Their leader raised the cry of "A spy, a spy!—death to the Armagnac!" and the whole number closed in around Owen Tudor, striking at him in every direction with their weapons. He felt himself wounded almost instantly in

several places, though his corselet and helmet parried some of the most dangerous blows. But, in the frenzy of his exasperation and despair, he thought only of the means of overtaking the scholar, who quickened the speed at which he rushed towards the gate on hearing the clash and outcry behind him, without stopping to look round. All parties felt that the game was of life and death, and that it hung on the chances of a moment! In this conviction, Owen showered blows among his assailants, and rushed on with such overpowering violence, that he must have broken through all their number if the one who appeared to be their leader had not uttered a terrific yell, and sprang upon him, clasping him in a strangling grasp and shouting, "Kill him, kill him!—it is the traitorous Armagnac, it is the Chevalier Sauvage!" Blows rung upon Owen's armour as on an anvil, and he felt some hands endeavouring to unclasp his gorget to allow way for a knife, the Burgundian meanwhile hanging on his neck and striving to drag him to the ground. He succeeded, but fatally to himself; for he fell with his head on a pointed stone, beneath all the weight of Owen and his armour, while some one who came up from behind struck furiously with a partizan until his enemy uttered a deep groan—and released his hold! But this would have been of little advantage to Owen if shouts in his rear had not suddenly distracted the attention of his assailants. The circumstance gave him space to rise on his feet, and the butchers, discerning a weapon gleaming round the corner of a street, took panic and fled towards the Gate of St. Germain. Owen made a staggering and ineffectual attempt to continue his pursuit, but he found he could with difficulty stand, and, while endeavouring to steady himself, the fatal portal rolled back; the open fields and country around the Abbey of St. Germain appeared; a whistle, shrill and piercing as if to summon a hawk from her highest flight, was heard—answered—and the clattering of horses' hoofs and the glitter of armour, and a deafening shout of triumph, announced the entry of L'Isle Adam and his knights into Paris!

Resistance was no longer possible, and Owen turned to flee. A break of moonlight at the instant fell on the pallid and gore-swimming visage of his late antagonist, and, with a horror and compunction to which no language could give the faintest echo, he perceived that it was—Renaud Caboche! Still he hoped that the young butcher might only have swooned; and he drew the bleeding carcass out of the wa-

the approaching squadrons, among some bushes of furze, ere he resumed his flight, imminent as his own danger undoubtedly was. Those persons whose approach scattered the butchers led by Renaud, had halted, and Owen knew not whether they were friends or foes. But he had only the choice between awaiting the arrival of the Burgundian horsemen, and of making his way through his pursuers—and he took the latter alternative.

"Vive Armagnac! who goes there?" cried the voice of one who followed him, which he recognised as that of Perrinet le Feron.

"Vive Armagnac!—but fly, if you have no more than these who are with you, quartenier!—Your traitorous son has admitted the enemy!" shouted Owen.

"Serpent! assassin! a million curses on his head!" exclaimed the miserable father. "I will not fly from him!—the first throat he cuts in Paris shall be the wretch's who gave him existence, and therefore deserves it.—Burgesses! sound the tocsin—let us resist to the last!"

"It is impossible, le Feron!—look how they come!—ten thousand horsemen at the fewest!" exclaimed one aghast citizen.

"How know we but that le Feron himself is in the conspiracy, since he suffered his son to obtain possession of the keys so lightly?" returned another. "I would stand to it were it all open blows—but here is treason!"

"Ye shall see; I will rend his heart out with mine own hands!" exclaimed the Armagnac father; and, breaking from the arms of all those who attempted to retain him, the last that Owen saw of him was, that he threw himself directly in the way of the approaching cavalry, madly shouting and waving his partizan, as if to sustain its whole attack alone! The rest of the Armagnac burgesses, few in number, half-dressed, and shivering from their beds, instantly fled in the contrary direction, and Owen Tudor was among the fugitives.

Wild soldier as he was, Owen perceived that the passage of the river was lost, and that there was nothing to prevent the Burgundians from reaching the opposite shore. His only hope now was, that the alarm might have spread, and a sufficient force have been assembled to resist their further progress. To join his friends, and, if need were, to perish valiantly with them in the struggle, was now the sole animating purpose in his mind. But he felt that he had not strength to trust himself again to the water, and that it would be impossible to

cross the bridge of the Châtelet, until the tide of the populace rolled back on its work of destruction. The Burgundian cavalry gained ground rapidly upon him, for they advanced at a gallop, and he saw that his best, and almost his only resource, was to step aside, and allow them to pass. He struck into the first alley he came by, and luckily in time to hide himself in the shadow of the houses.

The consternation of the unseen spectator deepened almost to despair, when the glitter of armour and helm, the innumerable sparkle of the upright tips of lances in the air, informed him that the whirlwind of cavalry that passed consisted nearly altogether of knights and their well-disciplined attendants—probably near a thousand in number! By far the greater part of these wore the complete garniture of the highest chivalric rank, and purple surcoats, embroidered with St. Andrew's cross.

Owen followed in the wake of this disastrous host, and soon distinguished, by the uproarious shouts in the distance, that the approach of their allies was perceived by the insurgents on the bridges. For the first time this mob of Paris, so furiously excited, and engaged in works of such violence, gave vent to its feelings in outcries and acclamations. But the predominant shout of the multitude—unless inspired by some of its crafty abettors—expressed a very gentle sentiment. "Peace, peace!—Peace, and the Duke of Burgundy!" proved that they had not forgotten the harangue of the poor scholar in the parvis of Notre Dame.

"Peace! and death to the Armagnacs!" returned the advancing squadrons; and the savage instincts of the masses kindled at the word, and a deafening echo pealed to the sky, "Death—death to the Armagnacs!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

A NIGHT IN A REVOLTED CITY.

Amidst this dreadful and long-protracted shout, the Lord of L'Isle Adam and his chivalry passed over the Petit Pont; and the mob, which obeyed its self-appointed commanders with the implicitness and regularity of disciplined forces, at Simon Caboche's order, cleared the way for their advance by pouring into the square of the Grand Châtelet. The two fortresses had not surrendered, but they made no resistance; and the Cabochiens had contented themselves hitherto with a blockade

Owen crossed in the foremost rush that followed the passage of the cavalry, without any other obstruction than that occasioned by the confusion and struggle of others who wished, like himself, to get into the square of the Châtelet.

There the Lord of L'Isle Adam halted in his advance, for the first time; and, with a shock that for a moment disordered their squadrons, the knights drew up in a compact body that seemed to become solid after a short agitation of tossing heads and manes and rearing chargers. The Masters of the Boucherie thronged around their friends; but no time was wasted in congratulations. A few brief words of communication and counsel were exchanged, and then the Lord of L'Isle Adam shouted decisive orders at the pitch of a very powerful, hoarse voice.

"You are best informed, Sir Pierre!—and you have the duke's powers—it shall be as you say!" he said, addressing the mendicant of the parvis, who appeared among the foremost advisers. "Hasten on, Caboche, with your butchers up the Rue St. Honoré—parade the streets—raise the duke's cry everywhere—and seize as ye go on all houses and persons of the false and damnable Armagnac council—above all, on the constable! Spare none who resist; none!—we will soon have prisons ready for those who do not! Veau de Bar!" he continued, turning to one of his principal knights, "win the Châtelet to your own use, for from this moment I appoint you Provost of Paris!"

"And you, my lord, proceed at once to the Hostel of St. Pol!" said de Giac. "Paris itself is not worth winning if we lose the persons of the king and princes! On to St. Pol! —We shall soon have assistance enough from the Place de Grève, that shall suffice to keep the Armagnacs divided and in consternation!"

Instant obedience was rendered to these commands, and the masses of the populace rolled forward with such good will and impetuosity that the square of the Châtelet was cleared in a few minutes.

It was about two o'clock in the morning of a fine May day when the flames of the insurrection burst out thus openly in Paris. The shouts of the insurgents terrifically heralded their approach, and seemed to multiply far and near, and in every direction, like the echoes of Tartarus to the barking of the hundred-mouthed dog. The very skies repeated the uproar. "Out of your beds, good people!—Peace, peace!—Vive Bourgogne! Vive Jean sans Peur!—Death to the Arma-

gnacs!" The most remote quarters caught and echoed the cries.

It was scarcely possible to proceed in any manner but with the advance of the great movement; and Owen was swept on with the tide. Headed by the Burgundian knights and the butchers, the rabble streamed into the street of St. Jacques, spreading the wildest terror as they proceeded. The affrighted inhabitants appeared at their windows along the line of march in their night-clothes, women shrieking, and men shouting, to demand the occasion of the uproar. But their cries were unheeded amidst the infinite noise of the advance. The blaze of torches, illumining the horrible visages of the Cabochiens and their rabble, or flowing in long lightnings from the armour of the Burgundian chivalry, was the only answer to the distracted querents from the windows. The inhabitants of the Rue St. Jacques were in general rich, and consequently Armagnacs—and the least dreadful supposition which any of them could form was that they witnessed an eruption of the discontented inhabitants of the Boucherie. It was observed with astonishment, but with some revival from the horror infused by this belief, that the multitude proceeded on its way without making any effort to attack the houses even of the more noted Armagnacs. The general confidence entertained in Taneguy Duchâtel persuaded many that the insurgents would soon be repulsed; and the more resolute hastily armed themselves to be ready to sally forth and co-operate. The sagacious leaders of the insurrection neglected all minor considerations, and swept on until they reached a point where, if any resistance was intended, it would doubtless be concentrated—where the Rue St. Honoré crossed their line of march, and commanded all the principal quarters of Paris. No signs of opposition, however, appeared, and the multitude turned off on either side with that deliberate execution of a military plan instinctive in the populace of Paris. Some followed the knights who proceeded towards the Hostel of St. Pol, to the right; but by far the greater number turned to the left with Simon Caboche and his butchers, who were to make seizure of the constable and others of the Armagnac council whose houses were in this direction. The intensity of the popular hatred overlooked the prospects of richer plunder and more safety in the train of L'Isle Adam's attack. Simon Caboche had no sooner uttered the words, "Death to the Constable!" than it was taken up and repeated in a thousand discordant and raging tones, every speaker adding something to the original proposition.

"Tear him to pieces!—'Let us make hog's fritters of him!'—'Let us roast him first!'—'Tear him with hot pincers!'—'Loupgarou shall eat him alive!'—'I will have the entrails for garters!'—'Let us bake him in the great town-oven!'—'No, the bishop's oven—I bake there; I shall relish my meat the better ever after!'—'We will all have a bit of him!'—'Faugh, he is too old and tough!'" were the least formidable expressions used by the zealous mob as they rolled in the direction of the constable's mansion, only interrupted by the dreadful shout of the more advanced rabble as it halted at his portals. A fearful uproar of crashing windows, of doors yielding to showers of the largest stones, was soon audible in the Rue St. Honoré, mingled with yells, cries, shrieks, and every conflicting utterance of horror and of hatred! But, with all the efforts he could make, Owen found it impossible to wedge his way through the masses that collected after this halt; and, perceiving that the surprise was complete, one only hope remained to him—that resistance might be made at the palace, which was strongly fortified, and in the close neighbourhood of the Bastille. Thither he determined to hasten with all speed, to share the efforts or doom of his allies. There was a shorter way to St. Pol, by turning along the bank of the river, than that necessarily taken by the Burgundian knights through the Rue St. Honoré. Moreover, Owen could advance no farther, and he took a route he imagined he should find silent and deserted; but which, to his surprise and alarm, brought him suddenly on a more terrific spectacle than he had yet encountered, in the Place de Grève.

Capeluche was there, engaged in the midnight execution so artfully dovetailed into the conspiracy. The stationary scaffold of the Grève was decorated with a cross formed of huge planks, on which he had already, though protracting the operation as much as possible, broken alive two criminals. Their shattered carcasses, bound to wheels, graced two corners of the erection; and he was binding his third and last victim to the terrific engine, made in the form of the emblem of the God of mercy. He performed this so slowly, that the vast mob were growing impatient, and were hissing and hooting as if at some performance submitted to their criticism. Capeluche felt touched in his honour, in the glory he derived from his professional skill; but he had powerful motives, and his absent, anxious air excited the observation even of the miserable condemned himself. "What is the matter, my king?" he said, for he was an old subject of the Roi des Ribauds. "Not that I am in any hurry; but thou seemest engaged in

thinking of something else—and it is always very unpolite to one's company!"

"Alas, my dear son, I have only you for an excuse to keep all these good people together—and I must make much of my last morsel!" replied the executioner. "Where can he be? what is happening?—I do not even hear a shout! Loupgarou, my child, who art so awkward—fasten me this poor brother of ours, at thy leisure."

The spectators at the midnight execution were the very scum and dregs of the Parisian populace; and never until now had the mountain chieftain ever imagined the existence of such a race, though he had seen the Val de Misère! All the deformities that disease and poverty, and suffering of every species, which the barbarous punishments, inflicted by the so-called "Justice of Paris" on its criminal population, could add to the human form without effacing it, were to be witnessed in every variety around! Yet the dreadful inhabitants of this district, habituated to blood by the spectacles of their ever-reeking scaffold, seemed assembled as at a festival. They were drinking, laughing, talking, embracing, singing, watching with critical eyes the progress of the executioner in his task!

It may be thought that Owen Tudor made as little delay as might be, in crossing this place of blood; but he found it difficult to pass through the numerous groups unobserved. His helmet attracted attention by its glitter; the rest of his battered armour he kept out of sight in his wet and slimy mantle. But many a jest was uttered on his appearance—many a conjecture, full of insolence, saluted his ears, without exciting the usually irascible pride of his royal blood. Luckily the terror of armed men, and of Armagnacs, was not yet dispelled in Paris; and he continued to force his way, with but slight resistance, to the skirts of the mob. But here some women of the lowest class, and most hideous appearance, surrounded him, and, tearing him from one another, overwhelmed him with poisonous caresses. He was struggling with these fair assailants, when a terrific shout from the mob turned their attention. Owen paused also, and looked behind, with all his desire to be gone.

Two figures had mounted on the scaffold, beside Capeluche and his valet. The beggar of the parvis, and Perrinet le Clerc! The latter, in a few frenzied words of triumph and exultation, was announcing to the mob the entry of the Burgundians, and the success of his enterprize.

"Yes, Parisians! eight hundred knights of Burgun-

in Paris—the scholars are preparing to join us—the Cabo citizens are already at work!" continued the mendicant. "Will ye also share in the glory of redeeming our good king from the power of the pernicious councillors who have ruined France, and sold us to the English?"

A deafening tumult of applause interrupted the speaker, and the cry of "To arms! to arms!" became universal.

"Be assured we have nothing to fear!" continued the scholar, who trembled violently. "I have taken care that we shall all share the same fate! The knights cannot escape, and leave us in the lurch. I have thrown the keys of St. Germain over the wall!"

"Vive Perrinet le Clerc!" resounded to the stars.

"Talk not of escape—we triumph!" shouted the mendicant. "We have only to help our friends! But we need a leader. Parisians! Shall not Perrinet le Clerc lead us to plunder and vengeance?"

"Vive Perrinet le Clerc!—plunder and vengeance!" was the universal veil.

"I cannot lead ye—I am a priest—the canons forbid us to meddle in matters of blood!" said the scholar of the Sorbonne.

"Tut, tut, the *canons* are in bed, and fast asleep to-night!—Perrinet le Clerc shall lead us!" said de Giac, and, amidst a mingled roar of laughter and acclamations, the scholar was constituted leader of the Place de Grève by the decisive ceremonial of being torn from his position, and carried along on the shoulders of the excited multitude. "On to St. Pol!" was the word; but, before the rush of the human tide could involve him, Owen was far in advance of its wave.

"Forgive me, my son; I have neither time to untie nor to finish you!" said Capeluche courteously to his victim. "But be not impatient; I will return at my earliest leisure. Adieu, till I have the pleasure of seeing you again!"

Owen hastened on, with the speed of a hunted deer; yet he arrived at the Hostel of St. Pol only a very short time before his followers. The panic had already spread thither, or treason was at work, for he found the gates thrown open, and the guards fled. By the time he had half crossed the park, the whole horizon behind him seemed as if ringed with wavering fire! It was the light of the insurgents' torches. Owen was rushing wildly on, when he suddenly heard the tramp of horse, and perceived a small body of cavalry approaching, from the direction of the Bastille, at a gallop.

"Hasten!" he cried. "Hasten, loyal cavaliers! and save the king and Madame Catherine!"

"Save the blasted oak? No, but the vigorous sapling," replied the voice of Taneguy Duchâtel. "To the dauphin's palace! Chevalier Sauvage! is it thou? What are the news? Whence come you?"

"Defend the Bastille—the Châtelets are lost," replied Owen. "Let us save the king!"

"Accursed liar of La Trimouille!—he persuaded us that the woman of the Boucherie told him all their secrets—that we were in no danger! My troops are all absent on incursions against the Burgundians!" said Taneguy, directing the sweep of his cavalry towards the hotel inhabited by the dauphin, in spite of Owen's cries and remonstrances.

The loyal but now somewhat bewildered Chevalier Sauvage made no attempt to follow the example. He continued his flight to the king's hostel, and arrived at the instant when appalling shouts announced the entry of the rabble into the palace grounds. Knights, butchers, men, women, children, wielding every imaginable variety of weapon, uttering every possible variety of shriek, yell, and shout, came foaming on like a furious sea, breaking its way through a dam. Owen had but just time to gain the back entrance of the palace, and to enter at one of the wickets, ere the whole building was surrounded by a raging flood of the insurgents.

The Chevalier Sauvage was familiar with the windings of the royal residence; but he was partly guided by shrieks and outcries in making his way to the presence of the king. In the Hall of Theseus was collected one of the most extraordinary courts that ever surrounded a monarch. The ladies and nobles of the royal household, with a confused throng of domestics, men-at-arms, and pages, scarcely one of them more than half clad, and in all the incongruities of costume that chance and haste could administer, were assembled in the wildest consternation around their mad king. Charles VI., wrapped in the mantle of one of his chamber-grooms, sat in a chair of state, whither his attendants had mechanically hurried him. He was rolling his eyes wildly round, and gnawing his lips, disregarded by the whole throng of courtiers. Among these Owen recognised nearly all the Armagnac ladies of rank residing in the palace, the Archbishop of Rheims, and the king's great officers of state. But his eye sought only one object, and almost instantly discerned it in the person of the Princess Catherine, no longer triumphant in her royal beauty

and pride, but standing beside the king's chair, almost colourless with terror.

The whole throng, but a few hours before glittering in courtly splendours, and full of mirth and festivity, resembled a group of condemned ghosts awaiting their fiendish tormentors. They gathered about Owen the moment he appeared, with cries, lamentations, and questionings, which made such a Babel in his ears, that the roar of the approaching multitude was scarcely audible. But he took his part with the audacity and rapidity suiting the desperation of events, and the hopes inspired by his prophecies revived by the glance of despairing trust Madame Catherine cast upon him.

"For shame, knights and gentlemen! let us barricade the palace, and defend the king!" he exclaimed. "The rabble of the Boucherie have risen in arms, but help will soon arrive! Let us give our friends a rallying point!"

Owen's words, and his undaunted looks, inspired some courage into the amazed Armagnacs. The king himself started from his fearful reverie, and, clapping his hands with wild joy, exclaimed, "Obey him in all things! It is the guardian angel of France! Obey him as ourself!"

But Owen needed little other applause, after he had seen the colour rush back to the pallid features of the princess, and had heard her fervent ejaculations, thanking all the saints that he was there, and safe!

Inspirited by the revival of his ambitious dream, Owen took on him the command which the king, but his own courage and presence of mind much more, conferred. Resistance, he thought, might at least allow time to make terms—perhaps for their friends to rally and come to the rescue! All obeyed him implicitly, even the aged archbishop; and before the assailants made their way to the hall, he had secured it with its innumerable bolts, and a pile of tables and benches heaped almost to the lofty carvings of the roof. The hall was lighted by windows at so great a height that little danger was apprehended thence. But their chief, or rather only defence, lay in the strength of the barricades and bolts. Few of the defenders were armed, and consisted principally of churchmen and the unwarlike dignitaries of a court. Desperate as he was, Owen only calculated, by concealing this circumstance, and using the authority of the king's presence, to secure the personal safety of the monarch and his retinue.

In a few instants a thunder of many voices at the door demanded admittance. Owen attempted to reply, but the

noise of hammers, axes, and maces on the timbers drowned his voice. Spears gleamed in at the folds of the portal, frequently shivered by the furious efforts of the besiegers to wrench them open. It was not until they had essayed the first violence of their onset in vain, that the assailants deigned to lend the smallest attention to Owen's requests to be heard. But the leaders of the Burgundians seemed now to interfere, and a voice which he thought he had heard before commenced a parley with him.

The case was desperate, and the Chevalier Sauvage demanded only that the king and princess should be treated with all respect, and the lives of the persons present spared. The Burgundian negotiator on the exterior replied with great civility, that they came to rescue the king from his enemies and ill advisers, and not to do him any harm; and that all who surrendered themselves prisoners should be received and treated with courtesy as such. Whilst this discussion lasted, the wrath of the populace and their numbers evidently increased; and fearing that they would force their way in, and an indiscriminate massacre follow, the archbishop hastily agreed to the terms, and ordered the portals to be opened. The king immediately threw one arm round Owen's neck, and, drawing his daughter to him with the other, awaited the entry of the assailants with a serenity inspired by his singular hallucination.

A rabble of the most ferocious populace, headed by L'Isle Adam and the mendicant of the parvis, rolled headlong in the instant the last bolt was withdrawn. The page who performed the operation was overthrown and trampled to death; and such was the terrible appearance of the mob, that the Armagnac courtiers fled, huddled together like a flock of sheep, behind the king.

"Sirs, we yield us! This is your sovereign and the royal damsel of France!—respect them, whatever ye do to us," said Owen, whose august companions clung to him, like drowning mariners to a mast that continues upright in the storm.

"We have promised, have we not, wild knight?" replied the mendicant of the parvis, with a short acrid laugh. "We mean to keep our word! Sire, will it please you to mount your horse, and ride to your Castle of the Louvre, to let the people see that you are rescued from your enemies and theirs?"

"Shall we, or rather be torn to pieces, and mount to heaven with thee?" said Charles, looking with mad implicitness at his young adviser. "This is one of the murderers of our

brother Orleans, for all he is thus disguised—the Sieur de Giac?"

"You shall with these lords, sire, for at this time there is no remedy!" said Owen, and the king immediately extended his hand to the broad grasp of L'Isle Adam. The Burgundian leader drew him off with a shout of triumph, and Charles was hurried off by a press of knights and the rabble. He looked anxiously back for Owen; but, even if the latter had been willing to follow, the princess clung to him with such shrieks of terror, when she found her hand seized by De Giac, that he could not stir.

"Lady! albeit in beggar's weeds, I am the queen your mother's chosen representative; and I command you, in her name, to accompany me. Here are her grace's letters to that purport," said De Giac; and the words produced a powerful effect on the princess, to whom her mother had always been a kind of impersonation of necessity.

"I submit me, in all humility," she replied, trembling, as she took the offered epistle. "But suffer me to have some friend of a known visage near me! Let this knight of my father follow us."

"Wilt thou go with us, fair knight?" said De Giac, with a smiling, terrible glance.

"I will go wherever my royal lady of France would have me; but demand to be fairly treated as your prisoner!" replied Owen.

"Doubt it not!—our prisoners shall make no complaints of us," replied De Giac. "My fair friends, secure all these prisoners, but harm none—we should not make men desperate! Keep with us, Sir Owen; her highness will deign to take your arm, for I am but a new courtier, and feel awkward!"

De Giac had provided all things as if with the certainty of securing his prey. A palfrey, suitably caparisoned, awaited the princess in a courtyard of the palace, surrounded by a body of men with pikes. De Giac permitted Owen to assist the princess into the saddle, and when she murmured imploringly, "Do not leave me, or fear will slay me!" he said aloud, "since you are a talisman of this worth, fair-seeming knight! lead at her grace's bridle." Owen joyfully obeyed, and, grasping the foaming bit of the steed, which was affrighted with the uproar, walked between it and De Giac, and surrounded by the armed retinue, from the precincts of the palace.

Rarely have human eyes beheld a spectacle more terrific

than was now presented by the insurgent multitude that flooded the whole space of the park and gardens of St. Pol. The blaze of torches lighted the sky far and near, like some hideous pandemonium, and revealed the most terrible and fantastic groups. The populace was now armed. The Cabochiens had broken into the Hotel de Ville, and taken from its vaults the weapons of the *milice royale*, deposited therein by the Armagnacs. The most dreadful instruments of destruction, invented by the barbaric cruelty of the middle ages, especially a lofty pike with a saw-edge to its keenly-pointed glaive, flashed in innumerable hands. But the favourite weapon of the rabble was a hammer or mallet of great bulk and weight, whence the insurrectionists of Paris acquired the title of "Maillotins," in the earlier part of the reign of Charles VI. The people had discovered the art of destroying their oppressors, in spite of their massive armour, by literally beating them to pieces!

De Giac himself scarcely liked the appearance of this democratic weapon: he muttered something between his teeth when they encountered a rabble led by Loupgarou, whirling these mallets over their heads, and echoing his ceaseless cry of "Vengeance! Vengeance!" And yet they seemed in a kind of flight, the cause of which De Giac had scarcely time to inquire, ere about a score of horsemen, with their lances set, came sweeping past. Owen perceived at a glance that it was Tàneguy Duchâtel, with the few faithful adherents that remained to him. He bore behind him, on his steaming steed, a half-naked youth, clinging to his belt, covered only by a blanket that floated loosely behind him.

"It is the dauphin—but it were in vain to pursue; and surely the Bastille itself is ours by this time!" exclaimed De Giac. "I must fulfil mine own office first—let us on."

And on they went. The tocsin was now sounding from every steeple and tower of the great city, and the whole population was aroused. But for the distracted rapidity of the chimes, it might have been thought that some nocturnal revelry was signified by the universal clamour of bells. The dismay of the Armagnacs was evidently too great to leave any hope of reaction. The terror of a great part of the citizens of Paris could not have been more intense if the English enemy had carried it by storm! The very lions in the royal menagerie shared the alarm, and their roar mingled fearfully with that of the human wild beasts rushing past their dens. De Giac himself, after listening to the sounds with some alarm

turned to his soldiers. "The Armagnacs have loosened their tigers upon us!" he said. "They cannot blame us if we loosen ours! Let this be known and reported!"

Having scattered this seed, the Burgundian emissary hurried on his attendants, as if in reality apprehensive of an attack from the ferocious animals in question. Owen shuddered; but his attention was absorbed in the princess, who frequently nearly sunk from her saddle with exhaustion. He also hastened their progress as much as possible, to draw her out of sight of the raging multitude; and as De Giac plunged into some byways with which he seemed familiar, along the shore of the river, the scene became almost instantaneously quiet and deserted. Owen knew not whither they were going, nor could he guess, until suddenly, and to his great astonishment, they emerged in the square of the Châtelet.

But now their advance was delayed by the pressure of a vast throng. Shrieking fugitives, parties of the rabble escorting numerous prisoners to various places of confinement, with every species of insult, frequently crossed their way. Personages of the highest rank, knights, nobles, bishops, abbots, and cardinals; the Armagnac councillors; members of the parliament; every person known as an adherent of the fallen faction, seemed lawful prey to those of the triumphant one. But as yet the object appeared to be the possession of their persons merely. Only a few carcasses were strewed about, and evidently those of persons who had made a violent resistance. In this manner the chancellor, Henri de Marle, was dragged past by a howling mob that covered him with blows of their dagger-hilts, but refrained from using the sharp points. One of this rabble had fantastically decked himself with the great seal and ornaments of the dignity enjoyed in its plenitude but a few hours before. De Giac relieved the new possessor of his charge. "We shall need this bauble to seal our parchments!" he said, clutching it from the ruffian's belt. "Get a bundle of sausages, my friend, instead: here is gold!"

De Giac seemed to desire to cross the square, and Owen now concluded that he meant to proceed to the Louvre. But the tumult was so wild and violent that it was impossible for some time to make any way; and, during this halt, so marvellous were the confusion and horror of the sights he witnessed, that Owen at times could not believe in his own vision. Houses broken open and their shrieking inhabitants dragged forth, clinging in their despair to the doorposts; crosses of St. Andrew on every breast where a few hours before it was

death to appear with one; frantic exultation and unbounded despair; knights, nobles, monks, ladies, men-at-arms and rabble, whirling past, with dreadful bands of women of the lowest order, intent on plunder, and many of them drabbled in blood—composed a continually varying phantasmagoria of horror!

The obstructions were at last somewhat dissipated by a circumstance that seemed at first to multiply them. A new mob—the mob of the Place de Grève—came rolling in a disordered, running, shouting, shrieking mass over the square of the Châtelet, headed by the king and the Burgundian knights. Charles rode bare-headed between L'Isle Adam and another knight, bowing incessantly to his horse's neck, while the people rent the air with shouts of joy, firmly persuaded that they had rescued their king from the power of his enemies. The armour of the knights gave a splendour to the horror of the spectacle, that heightened it by contrast. The glitter of the flags, and lances, and swords in the torch-light offered a brilliance but little in harmony with the dark, raging, ragged rabble that environed the chivalric squadrons, and shook the air with their shouts. But the spectacle attracted the admiration of the crowds before the Châtelet, and drew them on in its wake. In vain did an explosion of petards from the fortress, and the hoisting of the purple flag from its highest battlement, invite attention in that direction. The multitude flooded on after its kingly leader; and only one of the spectators seemed to take notice of the transfer of the great Keep of Paris. "Je le tiens!" said our old friend, Roman de la Rose, perusing the motto on the flag by the fiery glare of the petards. "Thou hast it indeed, Duke John!—Vive Bourgogne! Peace for ever! It is lucky that I never committed myself on the other side! Here comes a fool who did—but who is no doubt forgiven!"

As he spoke these words, Perrinet le Clerc appeared borne on the shoulders of the people in a singular species of curule chair, stolen from some barber's shop. But he sat in it with all the elation of triumph, and with the majesty of a Roman consul that had saved the republic, his right leg extended, as he lounged in the old leather chair, and directing the advance of his followers—not with the Ciceronian roll of parchment—but with a bloody pike!

"Ah, the priest has shed blood—I fear it will bar his preferment!" said De Giac, with his peculiar laugh. "Let us hasten now; for I see an immense herd of the scholars of the

University hastening to share their comrade's glory—and you might be in danger, were you recognised, Sir Chevalier Sauvage!"

So much consideration on his behalf moved both the gratitude of Owen and of the princess, who seemed to consider it a personal kindness rendered to herself. Only he could not imagine whither they were going, as they crossed the line of the king's march instead of following it to the Louvre. In a short time Owen's observation of the direction they took so much increased his uneasiness that he ventured to inquire where it was De Giac's intention to seek Madame Catherine a place of safety.

"We are not yet assured of the Louvre," replied De Giac; "therefore we will take refuge awhile in the Grande Boucherie! Albeit a rough shell for the pearl of France to rest in, 'tis a safe one in this churning of the waves. A gentle damsel, though of lowly lineage, will make our princess welcome, and cheer her as only women can each other—the Demoiselle de Troye!—Lead on, sir knight! why check you the good steed so suddenly?"

"The Boucherie!—Huéline de Troye!" exclaimed Owen. "Nay, sir, that were to put her highness in a formidable pass of danger, to the which I will never consent!"

"Look you, Armagnac knight, your consent is not asked!" replied De Giac. "And, as for peril to the princess, art thou well assured it is not rather thine own thou fearest?"

Owen was assailed by as many terrors as the rapidity of thought could pass through in the few seconds during which he paused in his reply. He knew that De Giac was acquainted at least with one version of his adventures in the Boucherie. To put himself in the power of the Cabochiens was almost certain destruction. But when he remembered his last interviews with Renaud Caboche and with Huéline—how he had left the minstreless, and how he should return—he felt that the "almost" might be left out. On the other hand, in what light must he appear to Madame Catherine if he deserted her in a situation he had himself declared so fraught with danger? What might not the frenzied passions of Huéline perpetrate on her defenceless rival? What explanations might not De Giac give of his reluctance, overwhelming when in conjunction with La Trimouille's former insinuations! Moreover, he was a prisoner, and there was something in De Giac's eye that assured no option remained. These thoughts passed [illegible]nningly through Owen's mind, and on went the checked [illegible]y faster than before.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CONCUSSION OF TWO DESTINIES.

THE escort entered the Boucherie, now apparently quite silent and deserted. It reached the house of Simon Caboche. Owen assisted the princess to dismount, receiving whispered thanks full of tenderness; De Giac blew a fearful blast on the horn at the gate; two miserable old servants crawled to it with torches, and Gules Caboche appeared with a look of panic inquiry in the gallery above the slaughterhouse. Poor Gules was sadly changed. Her jolly, ruddy visage was all blistered over with tears, and the usual gaudy gaiety of her garb was woefully diminished.

De Giac inquired for the Demoiselle de Troye, and Gules burst into a violent fit of sobbing when she heard the question, and was unable to make any distinct reply for some moments —moments of unutterable horror, expectation, and suffering of almost every species, in the heart of Owen Tudor!

"Ah, messire!" said Gules at last, "it may well be so with me! She is affrighted out of her life—she that had so much courage! We found her dead and senseless on the floor, in her chamber! She is there now, and she does nothing but sigh and look at us with such dry, parched eyes, that we are more afraid of her than of the Armagnacs! But where is my father?—where is Renaud?"

"Together, no doubt; fear nothing; all is well; there is no resistance," said De Giac. "We bring tidings that shall cheer Huéline better than all your medicaments; and we will to her chamber, for it is high and safe, and out of distracting sounds. Knight, lead the lady, since she prefers your Armagnac seeming to our Burgundian truth!"

Owen complied,—in what mood must be imagined! Gules threw the light of her torch to guide the visitors up to the gallery; but Owen's appearance was so much changed, or she was so blinded with tears, as not to recognise him. The mendicant, with courtly deference, desired him to precede with Madame Catherine; and he ascended with sensations that made him envy the ignorance of the animals so often led to slaughter in the shambles around!

And yet he was in a position which he would have ventured life to attain a few hours before! The fair princess of France was leaning on his arm, or rather in it, for he was compelled to support her trembling frame by passing it ro-

her waist. She looked to him, confided in him, wholly! No curious courtiers were around to watch and comment on every word and gesture! And yet there were few conditions of human agony Owen would not gladly have accepted in exchange for his good fortune!

On reaching the gallery, De Giac took the torch from Gules, and lighted his prisoners on with the ceremonious politeness of a lord chamberlain in a palace. But it was only that he might enjoy and analyse more certainly the expression of Owen's countenance. De Giac was infinitely puzzled with his rejection by Huéline de Troye. He would have given much of his hard-acquired possessions to ascertain the reason of her refusal! He desired to witness an interview between her and her quondam lover: at all events, his vengeance on Owen was secured!

In the brief space allowed by De Giac's ascending the ladder first, leading to the chamber of Jean de Troye, to show the princess how easily the feat might be accomplished, Owen managed to convey a request to her that she would keep her hood over her face, and, if possible, suffer no one to behold it. He dreaded the effects of her surpassing loveliness on the jealous frenzy of Huéline. But the reason he whispered was that the Demoiselle de Troye was the daughter of a ferocious Maillotin, and imbued with all rancorous sentiments against every species of nobility and superiority. And therefore it would be best, if it might be, to conceal that she was the daughter of a king and the fairest damsel of France.

The frightened princess complied instantly; so that when the whole group, headed by De Giac, entered the first chamber of Huéline's apartment, she was completely muffled in her mantle and hood of blue velvet, wrought with a gorgeous embroidery of golden fleur-de-lys.

The arrival of such distinguished visitors was certainly not expected by the daughter of Jean de Troye. When De Giac entered, he did not at first perceive her. She lay on the rushen floor, in the lowest prostration apparently of fear or of physical suffering, her head propped on the cushions of her father's ancient chair.

"What, the Demoiselle de Troye! whose heart I believed more firmly seated than many that stiffen armour!" said De Giac. "Damsel, I bring thee cordials better than any in thy father's gallipots—the assurance of victory, and this most honourable presence!"

Huéline started up at the first words of this address, or

rather at the first gleam of the torch De Giac threw upon her.

"What is victory? What doth honour here,—what honourable presence?" she exclaimed, wildly.

"The princess of France, with her devoted knight, the Tristrem of our day!" replied the Burgundian emissary, scanning the effect of his words with a fixed gaze.

It was electric! Those eyes, that seemed loaded with an eternity of anguish and despair, suddenly glared full of some terrific light! De Giac had seen that countenance in many moods; he had seen it express the fiercest emotions of humanity with the intensity of a volcanic temperament, casting the whole soul to the surface in its throes. He had seen it lighten with anger and shine with inspiration; gloom over with a darkness he shrunk from fathoming, fond as he was of piercing secresy. But never had he seen human countenance express at once such multitudinous and conflicting passion! The chaos baffled all research, all penetration! Yet the glance wherewith Huéline sought out her faithless lover, and perceived how he was occupied, was satisfactory to the Burgundian emissary. Owen was carrying rather than supporting the princess into the chamber, who, terrified more than ever at his warning against the hostess in whose power she was placed, could scarcely stand.

"Sir Tristrem! the princess of France!—the Chevalier Sauvage!" repeated Huéline, vacantly. There was a visible pause, only broken by Gules's amazed exclamation of "The Armagnac knight!" Yet is was but momentary, and then Huéline advanced towards the princess, murmuring in a low, indistinct, and dreamy tone words that sounded like words of welcome, or words of homage, or both confusedly united.

"You may believe in this damsel, lady," said De Giac, "she is a devoted Burgundian; consequently a faithful subject to the royalty of France! But what is the matter? What hath marred thy good looks thus, demoiselle!" he continued, in a very different tone, disarmed of its irony and bitterness.

"Nothing!—a fall—a bar of iron in my way!" gasped the minstreless, while Madame Catherine, terrified at her appearance, clung timidly to Owen. The marks of the violence she had suffered in endeavouring to detain the Chevalier Sauvage was but too visible in a disfigured purple wound on her forehead. The princess's fears were deepened by the statuesque attitude

of her young knight, and the indefinite feeling of repulse she experienced even in him!

A second glance at the woe-begone figure of Huéline, and the awe she seemed to inspire, revived Madame Catherine.

"Nay, damsel, rise; it is for us, we fear, to borrow the suppliant's tone," she said, improving this effect, as she imagined, by resuming the haughtiness of her royal rank. "But indeed we trust thou wilt not forget we are the daughter of a king, and that this knight is a most noble one, and ours! Messire de Giac has promised he shall not leave us—and with that condition we will abide here while we must. But we will not suffer him from our sight, for we know ye have ancient grudges against him in the Boucherie!"

"The knight is welcome, too—since you deign to wish him so, royal lady!" said Huéline, with an almost supernatural calmness. "But, I pray you, trust in me! Deign to remove this cumbrous mantle, and to breathe freely—for all I am, or have, is at your gracious acceptance!"

"Ah, knight, yes, we may trust this kind damsel?" said the young princess, caught by the winning sweetness and homage in Huéline's tone. "She cannot be that fierce woman of the Maillotins whom you feared would harm me! Beseech you, draw back my hood, and let me breathe cool air."

Owen complied mechanically, with a sigh of despair; and the eyes of the minstreless, blinded for an instant with eagerness, were fixed on the blooming visage thus revealed. An instantaneous series of contrasts rushed through the mind of the gazer. Her own dark brunette complexion—the exquisitely fair and roseate hues of the princess; the gaiety and coquettish sparkle in her eyes—the turbid fire that glowed in her own—the very tones of their voices, expressive in the one of profound passion and thought—in the other, of light vivacity and carelessness! The extreme youth of Madame Catherine, her unsullied freshness, the atmosphere of purity that seemed to breathe around her—what bitter thoughts and recollections did they not stir in Huéline's soul? And yet, withal, how was it that the result of the whole appeared to be a sensation of disappointment, rather that her royal rival equalled not her expectations, than that she surpassed it? There was even scorn in the smile that shone over her lips—in the withering glance that startled Owen from his gaze of terror.

The princess was indefinably displeased, and her natural haughtiness was roused by this audacious inspection. She

turned and spoke to Owen with an exclusiveness of manner that, bred in the Boucherie as she was, Huéline seemed to understand. She bowed deeply, and after placing a chair, with the assistance of the awe-stricken Gules, for her royal guest, she retired as far as possible to the other side of the apartment, where De Giac followed. The successful conspirators exchanged details of the insurrection, while Owen, to the great surprise of the princess, stood motionless and silent behind her chair.

The distant roar of the populace gave a terrible emphasis to the dialogue of Huéline and De Giac. The pique of the latter at his rejection vented itself in no outward form. The former seemed to give way to unbounded exultation—to listen, with a mirth approaching wildness, to his description of the terror and overthrow of the Armagnacs. Owen heard, with a faint glimpse of hope, that the constable was not found in his house, and was believed to have escaped, for Huéline's confidence appeared to abate on the tidings. She rapidly enumerated the dangers to be dreaded from several of the Armagnac strongholds—above all, from the garrison of the Louvre! De Giac laughed, and informed her, that the king had gone with L'Isle Adam to take possession of that fortress, on the invitation of the governor, who declared that he would only surrender it to Charles in person.

"Why, then, the game is once more in the hands of the Armagnacs!" said Huéline, with sudden consternation. "The garrisons of the Châtelets have fled thither—it is a trick of the crafty La Trimouille! You have sent the king into their hands, De Giac!—hasten and snatch him from them, or the main object of all our toils is lost!"

De Giac instantly took the alarm, for he had no great confidence in his military instruments, saving as such.

"Let a messenger fly instantly, and bid them halt!" he exclaimed.

"The thick-brained L'Isle Adam will heed no advice but yours! Take what forces we have about the Boucherie, and hasten to the rescue!" returned Huéline.

"But my prisoners! what will become of them?" exclaimed De Giac.

"Leave your pikemen with me—I will answer with my life for their safe tarriance here!" returned Huéline.

De Giac paused; but the danger of delay was vehemently urged upon him by his fellow-conspirator. He no longer doubted her hatred of Owen Tudor; and it occurred to him,

that it would greatly add to the bitterness of his rival's doom, if he received it in a great manner from her agency.

"I go—but fear not, I will leave a good guard," he said in an undertone. "This is your share in our great feast, Huéline! If Simon returns, do not let him butcher his ancient guest! Tell him to be patient as a courtier that looks to a fair wife for preferment; to leave the chastisement of so gentle an offence to a gentle judge—to yourself!"

With these words, and a brief apology to the princess, De Giac withdrew, taking care to leave a sentinel at almost every point of exit from the Boucherie.

Madame Catherine seemed relieved by the departure of the Burgundian emissary. She began to look more cheerfully around her; to utter phrases of gratitude warmer in meaning than words; and, at last, in the innocent hope of mollifying her Maillotin hostess, she fell to compassionating the injury that appeared on her forehead, and made inquiry how it happened!

Huéline was unable, though she made a strong effort, to utter any reply. Luckily, Gules Caboche had something to say that broke the strange silence that followed. She asked, with an intensity of anxiety which overcame all her awe and modest timidity, what had become of the squire, Rhys ap Goronwy—at least she thought that was his name—the merry squire that could speak no French?

"I have not seen, nor heard of him, kind Gules, since I left him asleep on his pallet in my chamber, when I——" began Owen, but suddenly paused, and his cheek whitened, as deeply as Huéline's flushed. Gules burst into an irrepressible fit of sobbing and tears, while Huéline's fevered gaze fell with a vague expression on the youthful pair, whom Nature herself seemed to have matched. There was something terrible in it, for Owen watched her movements as he might the creep of a tigress through the grass of a jungle.

And now there was a sudden, a marvellous change in Huéline's manner. She mildly reproached Gules for her useless burst of sorrow, and, entreating the princess's pardon for the poorness of the accommodations she could offer to one accustomed to royal magnificence, entreated her to retire to the inner chamber, where she might arrange her disordered dress, and take a little needful repose.

Madame Catherine would have complied, for, even in those disastrous circumstances, her lover's presence, and her natural

coquetry, made her appearance a matter of interest to her. The winning voice of Huéline soothed any fear she might have entertained of her hostess; but, when she rose in compliance, Owen grasped her hand, and drew her back. "No, lady, no!—You shall not go; she will murder you; she is a woman of the Maillotins! Nothing but death shall part us! —it is not long to wait," burst brokenly from his lips.

A smile of anguish writhed over the lips of Huéline; and, for a moment, the fierce passions in her heart vanquished the loving one that lingered in it. Only for a moment.

"Knight! you wrong me ever, but most now," she said, in a low tone, without looking at him. It was the first time she had spoken to him, directly, since their parting. "Wherefore should I harm the royal damsel of France? Then, Gules, bring wine and sweetmeats hither, and learn if your sire be returned! Your tears affright the princess."

Gules withdrew instantly, glad of a pretext to indulge in her grief without spectators—and the three were left together. Huéline had probably laboured at this result; and the moment Gules disappeared she addressed the princess.

"It was not for you, lady, it was for himself this false knight feared!" she exclaimed, with flashing eyes. "La Trimouille—report—or his own boastings—have doubtless informed you under what terms this guest of ours left the Boucherie? . . . His boastings, no! . . . He wooed me to shame, and with shame I expelled him even from this lowly abode! I vaunt not my virtue; I am betrothed to one I love—the Master of the Boucherie's son!—But well may he tremble! Renaud will return with my father, Jean de Troye, on the instant, perchance! Simon Caboche, De Giac, Perrinet le Clerc, all have vowed vengeance on him!"

"Thou didst woo this woman of the Boucherie, knight!—and wert rejected by her!" exclaimed Catherine of France.

There was a pause. Owen was overwhelmed with wrath and confusion. He was desperate, and his reply might be considered as a frantic defiance of the worst his fatal love could now do—now that this degrading revelation was made.

"It was ere I beheld your matchless self, royal lady!—until then I never truly loved!" he dared to say. "A watery halo shone amidst the clouds, which in my youth's ignorance I took to be the sun—until the sun himself arose, and dispelled it with a glance! Sweet princess, pardon, since only the certainty that it is death to say so gives me daring

to kneel thus at your feet, and avow that I love you—you only—you for ever!"

And pressing the princess's hand, which he still retained, to his lips, Huéline perceived that she melted into tears, and made no effort to withdraw it.

"It is true, I doubt not, lady!" she said, after a moment's pause. "The toy of a moment's liking—the amusement of his tedious imprisonment—no more!—Who could compete with such loveliness?—And royal!—royal, too!"

"And did the knight indeed woo thee?" said Catherine, with really unaffected surprise, for grief and the violence she had suffered deprived Huéline's face of its beauty. "Pardon him, then, since he persists not in the offence—if offence it was! What dost thou threaten, damsel?—what would thy butchers do against him?"

"I threaten not; I would save him—if your highness regards him with favour—if you would give aught in guerdon of such a service?" said Huéline.

"I!—but yes, thou winnest the gratitude of a daughter of France for ever, if thou wilt save the gentle knight, whose only crime is to love now as much above his degree as once below it!" said Catherine, after a moment's struggle with her pride.

"There is but one possible means, then!" said Huéline, trembling with impatience. "The passages and outlets below are all barred and guarded—above all, the street of St. Jacques! There is but one place in all Paris—in the Boucherie—which the Cabochiens will not suspect, will not search for their enemy! It is within there—it is mine!"

"Within there!—They will seek me everywhere, and thou wilt perish too!" said Owen, amazed, and almost incredulous at this excess of generosity.

"No! they believe too firmly in my wrongs, in my virtue—and well they may!" said Huéline, with a suffocating, dry sob, that would have way. "It is the only hope!—I can feign that I attended my lady the princess into that inner chamber, and that meanwhile the knight escaped from this!"

"Thy chamber!—with thee, damsel?" said the princess, with a disdain and angry vivacity that confessed more than she intended. Solomon would have been puzzled, at this moment, to decide which of these youthful women deserved the object of their rivalry.

"Let him stay here, then—and perish!" said Huéline. "Aha! will you not trust him with me, princess! I, that rejected, spurned, expelled him from the Boucherie?"

"But—if there are no means of escape—how canst thou pretend to the Caboches there are any, from this chamber, Huéline?" said Owen.

"Why not?"—Words are but words, knight!" she returned, passionately. "'Tis but to swear!—But I forget; men are not women, to believe! Listen: it is within possibility that thou mightst elude the watch that paces below; but not the mobs that yell for blood beyond! Leave the Caboches that possibility to believe in—that certainty to comfort them! When the uproar subsides, thou knowest there is a means of evasion from the chamber of the alcove!"

"No; I will not leave my precious charge until she is in safe hands, cost what it will!—I fear thee, woman!" exclaimed Owen. It was, indeed, hardly possible to believe in the generosity of the frenzied poetess.

"I will not go with thee, damsel! I will rather perish here with my faithful knight!" said the princess, now thoroughly frightened and bewildered.

"Hark, there are footsteps—the Caboches come! Save him from their bloody knives and hooks, lady!" exclaimed Huéline, distractedly. "If you would not that he should perish by horrible and lingering torments, if you are a woman, if you love him—bid him be saved! Knight!—man!—thou mayst trust in me!"

"Dear knight, let us in! Give me your hand—we follow, damsel!" ejaculated Madame Catherine. Huéline threw open the door of the inner chamber, not unknown to the guest of the Boucherie! The love of life, the terror of the doom that awaited him, the renewed blaze of his ambitious hopes, the hand of Catherine of France, extorted compliance! Huéline led the way, snatching up a lamp, and Owen Tudor returned into the chamber he had left under such different circumstances. The alcove, the flowers, the whole scene decorated by the hand of love—all was as he had left it, under such different circumstances, not many hours before!

Huéline's measure of devotion was not yet filled. "I must leave you for some instants," she exclaimed. "A window must be opened, a door unbarred, some bricks displaced, to give any probability to the escape. I shall return in a few beatings of the heart! Lady, be calm; all is well now, when even his enemy would save him!"

And she glided out, conscious as she was that the danger and horror of the moment would lend an eloquence to love, a courage to its revelations, which might promote its cause more than years of obsequious suit!

But she returned with more rapidity than was expected, for Owen was on his knees before the princess, imploring pardon for his presumption, pouring the legend of his wild royalty and daring aspirations in her ear, when Huéline reappeared! . She seemed to take no notice of the circumstance, scarcely let her glance fall on him as he sprang on his feet.

"Be silent, in Heaven's name! De Giac ascends with Simon Caboche!" she exclaimed. "Owen! noble knight, conceal yourself! Behind the tapestry of the alcove! This door must be left open, that trust may now, as ever, deceive!"

"Save him, and whatever royal gratitude——" began the Princess Catherine.

"Yes, yes; I expect a princely recompense; it is with gold that hearts like mine are bribed!" interrupted the minstreless.

"Huéline!" cried a loud hoarse voice from the exterior chamber—the voice of the Master-Chief of the Boucherie.

"Demoiselle de Troye, where are the prisoners?" said one that was lower-toned and softer, but more terrible; the voice of De Giac.

"The princess is better now! Lady, will you forth? We come, messires: a little patience!" said Huéline, so as to be heard by her alarmed querents.

"Farewell, then, faithful knight!—and, since it is for ever, yes, I pardon you your passing fancy for this gentle butcheress! —Yes, we will part thus!" exclaimed the youthful princess; and, yielding to emotions that conquered all her pride, she cast herself into the knight's arms, and more than met the quivering pressure of his lips. Huéline saw it, and for a moment her resolution wavered. She had almost thrown the door open and revealed the fugitive; but again the voice of Simon Caboche thundered, over the gentler but fiercer tones of De Giac, "Huéline!" and she started into recollection.

"I come; but ye affright my royal lady with these cries!" she said. "Behind the alcove, knight! conceal yourself carefully within the draperies, or we are all lost!"

And she dared scarcely wait until Owen had leaped over the couch, raised its splendid hangings, and thoroughly enshrouded himself in a recess behind, ere she threw the door wide open, kneeling on the threshold with the torch in her hand for the princess to pass. The action threw a wave of shadow over Owen's place of concealment, and gave him time to complete his seclusion.

"The Louvre had surrendered; the garrisons had not fled thither; were prisoners in their fortresses!" said De Giac. "But here is our victorious Master-Chief come for his share of the feast! What have ye done with the Armagnac knight?"

"Nay, what have ye? Have ye thrown him on the pikes below?" said Huéline, carelessly. "If so, we have no such great cause to love him that ye should not let us see them toss him on them!"

The Master of the Butchers was making a deep reverence to the princess, who retreated a step in horror when she perceived, by the glare of the torches they carried, the band of fearful-looking men who seemed waiting like wild beasts for a prey to be cast to them. They were nearly all butchers, armed with a great variety of weapons, torn at random from various owners, or the plundered arsenals of the Armagnacs. Huéline had but just time to clutch the princess's girdle and draw her forward, as De Giac advanced on the utterance of her reply, and Simon Caboche started up from whetting the long gory knife he held in his hand on his leather sandals.

"By the mercy of our Lady, we have him not!" thundered Simon Caboche. "Here are his gyves! doth he hang in them?" And he displayed a link of hideous implements used by butchers to suspend oxen while they skin and dress them.

"Sir Pierre has removed the prisoner no doubt; we left him here when my royal lady swooned, and every exit is guarded," replied Huéline. She was direfully pale, but her manner was singularly calm and unembarrassed.

"I left him under your ward, demoiselle! If he has escaped, you shall answer it to the duke with your head!" yelled De Giac, almost for the first time in his life yielding to a transport of passion.

"It has served the duke long; let him take his own, if he needs it, even so," replied Huéline. "Yet, methinks, it is rather the father of Renaud Caboche than the Sieur de Giac who is lord of life and death at this moment in Paris."

"Where is Renaud? What will he say when he hears the villain has escaped?" groaned Simon Caboche.

"But he cannot have escaped!" returned Huéline, seeming unconsciously to assist the exploring eyes of De Giac by raising her torch so as to throw its light into the inner chamber. "At least, not far!—Is not that an open window? He was desperate; he must have thrown himself from it; but he

cannot elude our guard round the Boucherie!—Hark, what noise is that?—He is recaptured! they are bearing him this way!"

A strange tumult was indeed audible on the ascent to the chamber of Jean de Troye; confused murmurs, groans, and vehement exclamations, as of men labouring to carry a precious burden up a steep access in safety.

"I will meet him!" shouted Simon Caboche. "Pardon me, my redoubted lady, if I must show you how we dress calves in the Boucherie! Skewers, my lads! bring me some skewers; I will set him up between our bull's heads, to bid knights and nobles beware how they assail the honour of the race of the Master-Chief of the Boucherie!"

The lattice-door flew open as these words were uttered; grim visages glared in of men engaged in drawing up something heavy in a mantle; Simon sprang forward to enjoy the first stroke at his enemy; all gazed staringly in the same direction. Huéline threw the light of her torch forward, horrified with some vague but dreadful apprehension, despite of all her consciousness of Owen's concealment—and the yell of Simon Caboche first announced the fact that it was his son, that it was Renaud Caboche, whose bleeding body was deposited in the chamber!

"Nay, father, I am not dead!—I ordered them to bring me hither, that I might die in Huéline's arms!" said the unfortunate youth, raising his gory head with difficulty. "Huéline, my beloved!—send for her; bear me to her couch; I can die there contentedly!"

"Princess, let us away! This is no scene for your presence," said De Giac, seizing Madame Catherine by the arm. "Who hath done this barbarous deed, and killed the comely youth?"

"It was at the gate of St. Germain; he was struggling on the ground with a knight who seemed in pursuit of Maître Perrinet le Clerc, when Perrinet le Feron came up, and struck him this grisly blow in the back of his head!" said one of the butchers.

"It was the Chevalier Sauvage, father!" groaned Renaud. "But you will avenge me!—Bear me to her couch; I am her husband, her betrothed; she will not grudge me this last, this only happiness."

"Speak, Caboche!—Le Feron thought it was his own son, no doubt!" said De Giac: even he was terrified at the silence and immovability of the miserable father.

"Bring him on," shrieked Simon, at length. "Bring

chirurgeons!—half of all I have shall be to him who saves my son! O Renaud, Renaud! my sole son, my last hope! my child, my son, my Renaud! Accursed for ever be the very name of Armagnac!—Thou shalt have vengeance, indeed, my youngest, my last, my only son!"

The butchers raised their youthful chief, and bore him into the chamber of the alcove, past Huéline, who stood fixed as a statue. They laid him on her couch; only a thin partition of gaudy drapery was between him and his fatal rival! And then Huéline staggered a little forward, while the princess, with a glance of despair, accompanied De Giac from the scene of suffering, and, probably, of discovery and death.

CHAPTER XXV.

LOVE AND VENGEANCE.

THE dawn of this terrible night of insurrection broke—and it was a revolution! The surprisal was complete—Paris was Burgundian!—and, with a soul full to overflowing of the dark and terrible joy the triumph such policies yields, De Giac returned to the Boucherie. He had no occasion to ask for Simon Caboche. The chamber where his son lay dead!—he was certain to find him there.

Renaud expired in a few minutes after he was placed on his betrothed's couch, in her arms; happy at least in this, that he died without comprehending, probably without hearing, the first wild effusion of her remorse that half revealed the dreadful secrets in her soul. If the father had not in a manner been paralysed with grief, he too might have suspected a meaning in the delirious outburst with which Huéline consoled the doom of her young betrothed, by declaring herself unworthy of his love, and imprecating vengeance on herself as the cause of his destruction.

For a long time Simon Caboche would not believe that his son could really be dead. He struck the surgeons, who, after exhausting their skill, assured him that the sufferer was beyond their power of recall. He clove open the skulls of two of the men who bore his son home, asseverating that they had deserted him basely and falsely in his conflict with his slayers! These paroxysms of fury were succeeded by fits of more than womanish sorrow, tears, and sobs. But no persuasions nor effort could induce him to leave the deathbed of his boy,

though Huéline, who alone retained any influence over him, exhausted every entreaty and supplication. In her turn, she would not leave him, as he frequently commanded her and even with dreadful threats, alone. Perhaps she feared that he meditated some mischief on himself. De Giac found them seated on each side of the pallid and gory body so lately animated with fierce but not altogether ungenerous passions. Simon held his son's cold hand in his; but he was as perfectly still and silent, and there was something of the stupid apathy of unconsciousness or of exhaustion in the gaze he turned as the triumphant emissary approached.

"It is all over, then?" said De Giac, gently. "Let us veil this dismal sight to a father's eyes!" And he attempted to raise some portion of the arras of the alcove, but found himself prevented with violence by Huéline.

"No, no, we will see him while yet we may!" she exclaimed. "This is part of our punishment—perchance of an eternal one!"

"Why would ye bury him when most likely he is not dead?" said Simon, in so weak and childish a pipe that his hearer was amazed. "We have all heard of men being buried alive; but ye shall not bury Renaud until he is darker than the plague! If we had but good mediciners now, he might yet be recovered! Where is Jean de Troye? Why dost thou not bring Jean de Troye, Huéline?"

"Alack, his skill would nothing avail—let him not come hither—Renaud is past all surgery!" said Huéline, shuddering convulsively.

"And I cannot obtain his release!—The new provost promises to treat him well, but declares that he will release no prisoners without the duke's express command!" said De Giac. "Jean de Troye, thou knowest, offended the Burgundian nobles almost as bitterly as the Armagnacs."

"It is true," said Huéline.

"Nor will he suffer any one to see him, under any pretext! He fears that if he were out he might resume some of his old fantasies—which would ruin everything," continued De Giac.

"It is true!" echoed Huéline.

"Let him come forth when all is done—when he is thoroughly avenged!" pursued De Giac.

"It will be time enough!" ejaculated Huéline; and her eye wandered, she knew not how, to the mason's level and tools on the wall.

"But, Simon! why art thou so silent?" pursued De Giac.

"If science had power to breathe life into death, Huéline possesses all her sire's—would she not restore her betrothed to life?"

"Philibert and Lambert were hung on the gibbet of Montfaucon, and Jean could not restore them—it is true!" said Caboche. "Simonet was slain in battle, fairly! I complain not of that! But they have assassinated this boy! How could he cope in arms with men?—with strong men, in armour?"

"Perrinet le Feron, who struck the mortal blow, lies trampled beneath the hoofs of a thousand horse!" returned De Giac. "The Armagnac who held him down while he was assassinated, the Chevalier Sauvage, is——"

"Ay! where is he?" yelled Simon Caboche, starting up.

"Doubtless, among the prisoners, in some of the places that are now chokeful of them—perhaps in the Temple, or in the Abbot's prisons at For l'Évêque, or in one of the Châtelets," replied De Giac. "At all events, I have so ordered it that not a rat can leave Paris, even by the sewers, without my permission. Moreover, I have caused proclamation of death and forfeiture to be denounced against any person, of either sex, who shall dare to conceal an Armagnac!"

"I have deserved something of the duke; let me have the killing of the Chevalier Sauvage!" groaned Simon Caboche.

"Alas, alas! prisoners are sacred!" exclaimed Huéline.

"Not from a furious rabble—and such have the custody of ours, and must until the duke's army comes to Paris!" returned De Giac.

"Bid him hasten his march, in the name of Heaven!" said Huéline.

"Wherefore? Dost thou fear that Perrinet le Clerc, in the power and arrogance of his mob Cæsarship, will compel thee to fulfil thy promise to him, and become his leman?" replied De Giac.

"Speak not thus—in this presence!" ejaculated the miserable Huéline, clasping her hands in wild entreaty. But in vain. The words had attracted the attention of Simon Caboche; and De Giac, who had his own secret reasons not to wish the leaders of the rabble to remain too friendly, affected astonishment, and inquired if he did not know what deceptive promises Huéline had been obliged to make to win the scholar of the Sorbonne! Huéline could not prevent the revelation, and she scarcely made an effort to do so.

"Be not angry, Simon! she needed vengeance, and dost

not thou?" pursued De Giac. "Vengeance, at any price, and on any conditions! And therefore thou must not seem to know the scholar's treachery until we have obtained it *on all the rest.*"

"Let me sharpen my knife on the heart of the Chevalier Sauvage—it is blunt with killing!" said Caboche, vacantly.

"Was Renaud, then, thy sole son? Were not Philibert and Lambert thy children, too?" said the remorseless politician. "And, if they were slain, who slew them?"

"I know not; the Armagnacs hung them!" groaned Caboche.

"The Chevalier Sauvage shall be yours; but to make sure of the murderers of thine eldest sons, Simon, methinks it would be necessary—to slay *all* the Armagnacs?" said De Giac, with some slight hesitation.

"Good! excellent! bring them to the Boucherie!" said Simon, with a dreadful laugh.

"Nay!—we must take the Boucherie to them!" returned De Giac, in a low tone. "But, first, we should take care that none escape us! We must pannier our grapes to the last bunch, as they do in your father's land of Champagne, Huéline, ere we squeeze the good red wine of vengeance to the last drop!"

"Vengeance!—what, an universal destruction! not one spared!" said Caboche, staring at De Giac, and rubbing his hands with maddened glee.

"The duke consented to it; for thus only can France be saved, and our civil war concluded! The destruction of one or the other faction must be—we have it in our power to be the survivors!" said De Giac, calmly.

"Let us to work; let us go; I am ready!" said Caboche, searching gropingly for some weapon in his belt. "I shall not be the only woeful father in the world, then! Had the Chevalier Sauvage ever a father, Huéline?"

"A right noble one—a royal one—a barbaric king!—but, but—the nobles and knights will never consent to such horrors, such treachery, De Giac," said Huéline, breathlessly.

"I bear the duke's blank commission for all I do; they, too, have hates to avenge, plunder to hope for!" replied De Giac. "There is example for it they cannot refuse—the example of a mighty king and soldier, of Henry of England. At Agincourt Henry slew his prisoners, because he feared rescue! And so do we fear rescue!—the Bastille is still in the hands of the Armagnacs! They are collecting forces

there, which may wrest Paris from us again ere our succours can arrive! Nobles and knights need take no part in the matter, and shall not dare to interfere!"

"How not?" said Huéline, bewilderedly.

"The mob of Perrinet le Clerc and the Cabochiens may do it," replied De Giac. "It is but to throw our Parisians into a panic, and then into a passion, and have a voice ready to shout a word—and all is done!"

"And that word?" ejaculated Huéline.

"Loupgarou shall utter it—you taught it to him, demoiselle!—it is, VENGEANCE!"

"Vengeance! ay, vengeance! There is no other word remaining!" shouted Caboche. "My son, dost thou hear me?—Thou shalt have vengeance, at least."

"But Perrinet le Clerc is—a priest!—How would you that he should shed blood?" said Huéline.

"With his knife!—we must stop his preferment in the church, or Renaud will rise from his grave!" returned De Giac. "But deem not we shall lack instruments, Huéline! Gather all the roses in thy father's gardens—and methinks they smell with a plentiful fragrance hither—wreathe them into coronals, and I will send you men to wear them who shall shrink from nothing that I bid them do, and who shall wear them for a token of the same!"

"I will wreathe them! Yes, believe me, I desire nothing but vengeance—on all the Armagnacs!" said Huéline, in an aghast and horror-stricken tone. "Yes, yes, De Giac, we lowly born, we poor, we trampled, we despised, we yet have vengeance!"

"I am ready!" said Caboche, starting wildly up, and looking at De Giac like a bloodhound that watches his master's eye to spring.

"Be not hurried: thou knowest, Simon, who are Armagnacs in Paris, and we will not miss one—lest that one be the Chevalier Sauvage!" replied De Giac. "We will have them all, ere we begin at one! It will also divert thy mind from this sad spectacle to go from street to street, from house to house, and leave not a single Armagnac at liberty. What sayest thou?"

"Lead him away; for he will madden here!" said Huéline, eagerly.

"And leave poor Renaud alone, Huéline?" said Caboche, bursting into a torrent of tears, interrupted by hysterical sobs and groans that seemed to rend his large chest in the passage.

"No, no, no! It shall be borne away!—Renaud shall be laid in the chamber where—in our best chamber, father, thou knowest!"

"Call me not father, Huéline, or thou wilt cleave my heart!" groaned the Master-Chief. "But I will go; they need me to see that none escape! Come thou with me; thou art as little fit to remain with Renaud! for didst thou not love him once? And look how he lies!"

"I dare not, I dare not! All perchance is known when the soul looks no longer through clay and dust!" murmured the wretched betrothed of Renaud Caboche, and De Giac led her totteringly along after Simon, who moved with a quick eager step—a giant refreshed, not with wine, but with blood!

Scarcely had the sound of their footsteps died away, before the flower-wrought arras of the alcove moved back, and a ghastly visage peered out! Few could have recognised the beautiful knight of Wales in the horrified countenance that shrunk back from the dull grey light of the dawn, illumining the gore-bedabbled features of the corpse extended on the couch before him. Had there been no other reason for flight than that silent presence, Owen would have hazarded existence cheerfully, to escape from it. But there were a million! The abhorrence he had now conceived of the dreadful minstreless mingled strangely with an anxiety to preserve her from the possible consequences of her reckless generosity; the revelation of a plan of massacre which would not only ruin, but extirpate, the Armagnacs; the knowledge that the Bastille was still in their hands, and that it had become a rallying-point whence the horrible design might be frustrated; the splendid retaliation offered for the discovery made by Huéline to the princess, who, in spite of his avowal of attachment to herself, would remember that she left him in the power of a woman whom he had once loved, and whose efforts in his behalf seemed to argue a relenting sentiment! All these ideas, united with the certainty that he could encounter no danger worse than that from which he fled, decided Owen to attempt an escape, at whatever risk, by his old route through the house of Jean de Troye.

There was not an instant to be lost; the attendants on the dead would probably soon arrive, and, whatever precautions Huéline might take, their movements would be very likely to betray him. And therefore not an instant did Owen Tudor hesitate! He crept suddenly past the body of Renaud, which in his horror he imagined quivered at his hated breath, and gained

the floor of the chamber. It was a dreadful moment, and only a moment! Owen scarcely remembered how it happened, how the thought flashed with such lightning rapidity through his mind. But his glance fell on the richly-emblazoned Burgundian surcoat prepared for him by Huéline, which in the confusion and hurry of events remained where he had cast it in scorn. He snatched it up; and it was with him when he arrived in the house of Jean de Troye.

At first Owen had confusedly intended to hide himself among the ruins until darkness might afford him some hope of evasion. But the possession of this surcoat, and the great probability that the passions of Huéline would boil over at length in some deed of madness and despair on discovering his flight; that she would track his steps; determined him to make no farther pause than was necessary to clear his armour of some of its stains and the weeds of the Seine, transfer the surcoat to his own shoulders, and close his vizor. In this manner, and with his sword sheathed in seeming confidence, but ready to purchase its master an honourable death, Owen thought that he might pass for one of the Burgundian chivalry. The confusion of the nocturnal mêlée might account for whatever was disordered and wild in his garniture, and Owen carefully stripped off every shred which he imagined might betray him, even to the golden ball the king had crowned his casque with, in remembrance of his dream.

Yet was it not without a deadly sensation at the heart that Owen found himself, in the broad daylight, pacing along the street of St. Jacques. The manner of the first man-at-arms he encountered, however, reassured him, who saluted him with marks of great respect, deceived no doubt by his splendid surcoat. Moreover, the way was so crowded and confused with hurrying multitudes, that few took special notice of any one, and he proceeded towards the Rue St. Honoré, hoping thence to make his way to the Bastille.

On arriving at this point, Owen beheld a fearful confirmation of the efficacy of the measures taken by De Giac. The man in whose house the Constable d'Armagnac had taken refuge and concealed himself, a poor mason, who tenanted some wretched premises in the rear of his magnificent mansion, terrified at the threat of death and confiscation against all who concealed the Armagnacs, betrayed him to his enemies. Owen reached the Rue St. Honoré at a moment when the constable passed on his way to the prisons of the Palais, in the Isle of the City, mounted on a wretched hack

behind his betrayer, with his feet tied beneath the horse's belly. The aged warrior was completely covered with mud and bleeding bruises from the stones cast at him, followed by a raging multitude yelling for his blood, overwhelming him with curses and imprecations! Yet he sat upright and undauntedly, with as stern a look as he had worn on the day of the parvis, occasionally pointing with a scornful and menacing gesture towards the Bastille, as if denouncing an approaching retaliation and vengeance thence. It was not wise, but it was valiant; and the soul of the young mountaineer glowed hotly with indignation, and his resolution revived, at the spectacle of the undaunted demeanour and injuries sustained by an aged soldier whom he had learned to reverence as his leader and chief.

But his own dangers increased as he proceeded, turning into the faubourg of St. Antoine, for the fears of the Burgundians were evidently all on the alert towards the Bastille, the only fortress of Paris that remained in the hands of their enemies. The whole line of way was occupied by men-at-arms and bodies of the rabble; but luckily they were too much engaged in noisy disclosure, in drinking, sharing plunder, and the restless, causeless movements of men under the influence of strong excitement, to take any particular notice of Owen. His emblazoned sautre was a sufficient passport with the soldiery, until he reached the termination of the street or road of St. Antoine, where it debouched into the open fields around the ditches of the Bastille. This was strongly guarded by a mass of archers and knights, with two culverins; but the former were so much exhausted with the night's fatigues, that nearly the whole number, horses and all, were asleep. Owen hoped to pass without exciting observation, and the aspect of the strong fortress, with the white standard waving haughtily from its ramparts, revived his sinking energies. He was threading his way through the drowsy archers, taking as much care as if he valued their repose not to disturb them, when one of the knights, whose plume was nodding over his steed's mane, suddenly started awake. "Whither go you, knight?" he said. "Know you not that the arrows of Taneguy range over the whole space beyond?"

"A good knight fears not death!—Follow me who dares!" replied Owen, darting resolutely forward.

"Is he mad or drunk?" mused the Burgundian, as the rattle of cross-bows announced that the Armagnacs had dis-

cerned the approach from the walls of the ditches. But at the same moment he heard the stranger shout, "Brothers! it is I, the Chevalier Sauvage!—Vive Armagnac!" And, rending off his Burgundian surcoat, Owen crossed the intervening space almost as swiftly as any of the bolts that had met, but missed him, plunged into the moat before the great drawbridge, and swam to the opposite side through its slimy green waters.

The Burgundian knight instantly raised the alarm, and his archers sprang to their bows; but Owen was beyond the reach of the shower of long-shafts that pursued him. A ladder lowered from the ramparts, and held there by the strong grasp of Taneguy Duchâtel and some other knights who chanced to be on the spot, gave the active mountaineer the means of climbing to the embraces and congratulations of his friends.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LULL IN THE STORM.

Owen Tudor was destined to render only destructive services to the cause he had espoused. The intelligence he brought into the Bastille drove the Armagnac leaders assembled there on a desperate attempt to relieve their friends from the menaced danger. To win Taneguy's belief to the dreadful atrocity meditated, Owen was obliged to confess, under solemn promises of secrecy, the means by which he was assured of the reality of the project he divulged—the dishonour of Huéline! The character of De Giac abundantly supported the information; and Owen urged the expediency of a sudden attack on Paris, before succours could be sent to the stormers, with a vehemence that carried away all men's convictions. So much time only was lost as was absolutely necessary to the gathering of a force at all adequate to the attempt; and, on the third day after the surprisal of Paris, sixteen hundred Armagnac combatants poured like a torrent from the gates of the Bastille into the very heart of the city.

At his own passionate request, Owen obtained the command of a select body of knights and mounted archers, destined to rush on the Louvre, and endeavour to rescue the king and the Princess Catherine from their Burgundian capturers! The dauphin was already placed out of danger by the cares of Taneguy Duchâtel, who conveyed him safely to Melun,

whence he continued his flight to the central provinces of France.

But even Owen had not calculated the energy of the passions he left roused in the Boucherie. The discovery of his flight destroyed almost the last hope of Huéline, and enlightened the revengeful madness in her heart to all that was to be feared. The dread of an attack from the Bastille, which she infused into all men, the mighty and rapid preparations she caused the leaders of the people and of the Burgundians, Perrinet le Clerc, Simon Caboche, De Giac, L'Isle Adam, and the new Provost of Paris to take, effectually disconcerted the projects of surprise entertained by the Armagnacs.

Perrinet le Clerc was drunk with the elation of popular applause, with blood, with the insolence of the unbounded power to which the enthusiasm of the mob had raised him. The death of Renaud removed apparently his only dangerous rival; in the frenzy of his ambition and triumph, he strove to stifle the remorse of his share in his father's destruction by an incessant revel of blood and agitation. He listened implicitly to the counsels of Huéline. The laborious De Giac forgot no possible means of consolidating his success; and meanwhile Simon, with an unceasing, indefatigable zeal, that excited general wonder, destroyed all hopes of co-operation from the Armagnacs of Paris, by rooting them out, one by one, and yet in multitudes, and casting them in heaps into the various strong prisons provided for their reception. The restless ardour of Huéline was sufficiently accounted for in her attachment to the Burgundian cause, and in the revenge due to the manes of her betrothed.

The Armagnacs poured, as we have said, like a furious torrent from the Bastille, and their yells resounded far and near, as they rolled on unobstructedly up the street of St. Antoine. "Death, death!—the town is ours! Hurrah for the king and the dauphin! Vive Armagnac! Kill, kill!" were the cries that startled the Burgundians, not to flight, but to resistance. None, indeed, was offered, until the assailants reached the square of the Châtelet, insomuch that they began to believe themselves, and to imagine that Paris was once more in their grasp! But at this point showers of arrows from the Grand Châtelet arrested the advance of the Armagnac column. The Boucherie appeared swarming with its armed denizens, and all the streets in advance were strongly secured by barricades of iron chains, fastened to staples in the houses, at intervals, and at heights sufficient to break the

charge of the heavy-armed Armagnac cavalry. Almost at the same instant the whole street of St. Antoine, through which the assailants had advanced without obstruction, became suddenly alive with enemies. The roofs were covered with black masses of the populace; all the windows were crowded with combatants; and stones, furniture, bricks, tiles—every weapon that deadly hatred could improvisate—arrows, spears, scythes, boiling pitch and water, fire itself, were hurled on the Armagnacs! The assailants found themselves falling in heaps, slaughtered helplessly, and covered with the most horrible wounds, without the power of retaliation or defence.

It is true that the head of the attacking column, under command of Taneguy Duchâtel, arrived in the square before the citadel, whence he had once controlled Paris. But every effort to break the chains was found fruitless, and meanwhile a murderous shower of arrows and bolts, from the towers of the Châtelet, thinned the masses of the assailants. At last Owen, frantic with rage and excitement, shouted to his companions to follow him, and, digging his spurs to the rowels in his steed, attempted to leap the first barrier. The charger fell under the weight of its panoply and that of its rider on the chain, and remained with its fore feet over, inextricably entangled, but struggling, and rending itself to pieces in the effort to get free.

No knight or man-at-arms offered to follow the example of the rash young leader, for at this moment the Veau de Bar, with a powerful mass of cavalry, dashed headlong on their disordered flank from the Grand Châtelet. Taneguy rallied his forces with the skill and determination for which he was renowned, and a furious hand-to-hand conflict covered the whole square with blood and confusion. But by this time the alarm had spread, and the tocsin, resounding from the steeple of Notre Dame, summoned the Burgundians to arms. The Lord of L'Isle Adam, at the head of his knights and some reinforcements that had arrived under the command of John of Luxembourg, a famous general and partisan of the House of Burgundy, advanced from the direction of the Louvre. The populace poured in on every side, and the denizens of the Boucherie, encouraged by the arrival of their military allies, raised dreadful shouts, and seemed preparing for a sortie. At the same time, perceiving that their way to the Bastille was lined with enemies, and fearing that the fortress might be assailed from St. Pol, Taneguy Duchâtel and the other Armagnac chiefs were compelled to order a retreat. The

yells of a mob of scholars approaching from the University, and of a populace gathering in the Val de Misère, completed the dismay of the Armagnacs, and finally changed their retrograde movement into a flight. Overwhelmed with missiles from the houses in the Rue St. Antoine, attacked at all the openings of the streets by the infuriate populace, and charged continually in his rear, even the valiant Taneguy lost heart, and clapped his spurs to his horse. This was the signal of an universal panic and confusion, and scarcely a fifth part of the combatants that left the Bastille re-entered it with their discomfited leaders. The rest were either taken prisoners or slain. Five hundred carcasses strewed the square of the Châtelet and the street of St. Antoine. So great was the advantage of the cover under which they fought, and of their barricades, that only about forty of the Burgundians were killed in effecting all this slaughter of their enemies.

Meanwhile Owen was assailed both before and behind by the forces of L'Isle Adam and of the Châtelet. The chest of his steed was absolutely torn open on the chain, and the wretched animal was bleeding fast to death, struggling and plunging to the last. Still Owen continued to defend himself with a desperate courage and vigour that excited the admiration even of the Burgundians, who became chary of approaching within reach of his strokes. Several knights called to him to surrender, and the Veau de Bar himself, after receiving from his sword a blow that struck his helmet off, exhorted him to yield, offering his hand as an assurance of safety, and pointing out the flight and confusion of his allies. About the same time, the butchers raised the chains and opened the gates of their shambles, and rushed out, flourishing with their knives madly in the air, in pursuit of the flying enemy. Owen saw that to persist was certain destruction, and the hope occurred to him that, if he could obtain the pledge of the Burgundian chivalry to his safety, even the vengeance of Simon Caboche might be baffled.

"I yield me, Sir Guy de Bar, to you and to you only, on condition that you swear to keep me as your prisoner, and admit me to ransom!" he exclaimed.

"Certes, what else should we do with our prisoners, knight?" returned the new Provost of Paris, with some surprise, and extending his hand with a readiness that showed that he at least harboured none of the evil designs of De Giac, for the Veau de Bar was known as a fierce but honourable soldier.

"I claim your knightly word, then," said Owen, "and entreat you to let me be taken at once into your fortress; for I am the Chevalier Sauvage, and the butchers have sworn my destruction."

The Veau de Bar seemed to be aware at least of this danger, and instantly gave orders to remove his prisoner to the Châtelet, while the butchers, headed by Caboche, continued their slaughtering career up the Rue St. Antoine.

At the gates of the Châtelet Owen Tudor was welcomed by one who had been a spectator of the conflict, but probably with more tumultuous feelings than many engaged in it. It was De Giac, who, in the universal confusion, seemed unable to obtain a dress more suitable to his real rank than the tatters of the mendicant of the parvis. Or perhaps it pleased his bitter nature to issue commands to the most powerful knights and nobles in this garb of misery and degradation. He recognised Owen with the instinctive rapidity of hate, and bade him welcome to the society of his friends in the donjon of the Châtelet, with a smile that revived in Owen's heart the horrible apprehensions he had so much right to entertain.

At present, however, he was conducted with the civility which his valour, and the commands of the Veau de Bar enforced, to the central tower, or keep of the Châtelet. It was a round mass separated from the rest of the pile by a deep ditch of stagnant water, that contributed no doubt to the general ill health of the locality, whence the plague or some other dreadful form of fever was rarely absent. A slender drawbridge, which only one person could cross at a time, conducted to a low narrow rampart running round the keep, and opened by a strong door into a series of chambers, one above the other, connected by flights of stone stairs. These rooms were scarcely lofty enough to stand upright in, but were as large in circuit as the donjon itself. Narrow apertures admitted light and air on one side only, and certainly not sufficient of either for the use of the innumerable prisoners that crowded the chambers.

These unfortunate persons had heard the shouts and tumult of the battle in the square below their place of confinement, and crowded around Owen to learn the result. He recognised among them persons of the most distinguished rank, members of the Armagnac councils and parliament, and of the royal household. Among the latter was the Lord de la Trimouille, whom two or three days of terror and ill usage had reduced from the most splendid of courtiers to the most miserable and

woe-begone of prisoners. The appearance of his rival among the sorrowful number gave La Trimouille a moment's gleam of malignant satisfaction; but it vanished when Owen delivered to his eager and supplicating auditors an account of the result of the attempt to effect their liberation. Yet he was interrupted, almost at the first sound of his voice, by a wild Welsh exclamation, and Rhys ap Goronwy sprang from a remote corner to his master's feet. The unhappy squire understood nothing of what had happened to him save that he was seized in his bed, in the palace of St. Pol, by some ruffians whom he took to be robbers; that he resisted with all his might, was severely hurt with a club, and finally led away captive, with his hands tied behind him, to his present residence.

Owen unbound his squire, whose wrists were deeply cut with the tightness of the thongs, while he spread his tidings of ruin and despair. But the terror and anguish of the prisoners in the discomfiture of their friends were not increased, as they were with Owen, by suspicions of an ulterior and more dreadful doom to be expected. He felt that such horrors would not be believed unless he urged the circumstances that satisfied Taneguy Duchâtel; and Owen Tudor would not give his enemy the enjoyment which it was probable he would take in the exposure of Huéline's frailty.

Every hour and every prisoner that arrived confirmed the hopelessness of the Armagnac cause. The battle of the Rue St. Honoré was so decisive that Taneguy no longer hoped to preserve even the Bastille. He had fled from it with his few remaining forces, and it had surrendered. New forces of the Burgundians hourly entered the city, and Paris was completely in their hands or in those of the populace.

La Trimouille took hope from the very desperation of these circumstances, and persuaded himself that, now the Burgundians were assured of victory, they would accept ransoms or exchanges for their prisoners. He even began to jest and satirise the continued gloom and despondency of Owen Tudor, imputing it laughingly to his poverty making him justly apprehensive of a very slow release. Once he ventured to inquire tauntingly of the Chevalier Sauvage whether he thought the daughter of Jean de Troye would pawn her father's gallipots to raise his ransom? But the look he received in reply made him dumb for hours after. Then he insinuated, in a timid undertone, doubts of the Welsh knight's courage, and drew a very advantageous comparison of his own

cheerfulness and fortitude. Finally, La Trimouille jested and vaunted himself into such a good humour that his chief complaint was on account of the quality of the provisions served to them, and all his fears were reduced to a doubt whether his court enemies might not take advantage of his absence to allege his riches, and prevail on the Dauphin not to use the treasure of the state in the payment of his ransom.

The Chevalier Sauvage himself began to resume confidence when days, and indeed a whole week, elapsed without any sign of the terrible project of De Giac being put in execution.

After the first effervescence of popular joy and triumph, Paris seemed to have returned to her tranquillity, in the keeping of her new and beloved masters. Owen reflected that De Giac's plan might merely have been an effusion of the maddening hatred of conflict, or designed to divert the thoughts of Simon Caboche. He considered the improbability that knights and nobles would lend themselves to so atrocious a vengeance, or that the rabble, furious as they were, could forget that the Armagnacs were, after all, Frenchmen, of the same blood and language as themselves. He was comforted by the knowledge that the prisons of the Châtelet, at all events, were not in the hands of the populace, but of a leader of high rank and name. The very circumstance that he himself remained unmolested among the other prisoners, when it was certain that De Giac must have carried the news of his capture, convinced Owen that the Veau de Bar meant to keep his word to him. The vengeance of Simon Caboche would else have reached him, he could not doubt.

The prisoners of the Châtelet took it in turns, or rather in batches, to ascend to the roof of the donjon, to take such air and exercise as their numbers and its situation permitted. From this elevation, the square of the Châtelet and the roofs of the Boucherie were commanded; and many a gloomy hour of repentant and indignant meditation did Owen spend, gazing towards the abode of the Parisian syren, unconscious that, although from that distance the prisoners on the summit of the Châtelet could seem little more than a confused anthill astir, eyes, filled with remorse, and tenderness, and wrath were continually turned towards them in the hope of recognising one beloved above all, alone among all

Early on the morning of the sanguinary 12th of June, Owen was among a considerable number of prisoners—with others, the Lord de la Trimouille—inhaling the fresh air, and almost for the first time yielding to a feeling of security and hope. He imagined that the Princess Catherine must by this time

have heard of his fate, and that she would not fail to make some effort for his release. All was tranquil, above and below; the sky beautifully blue and calm, the whole city appearing to luxuriate in a festive repose, after its toils and turmoil. La Trimouille was kissing his hand at the Boucherie, and entertaining some of the younger prisoners with hints of the good fortune he had enjoyed within its precincts, when suddenly the rattling, discordant peal of the tocsin from Notre Dame broke the stillness.

As if by a preconcerted signal, the belfries of all the innumerable churches of Paris, even to the remotest distances, took up the alarum. The air was shortly in one universal palpitation of terror that diffused itself sympathetically among the population of Paris. The cannons of the Bastille, discharged as if repulsing some assailants, were answered by affrighted, irregular peals from the two Châtelets and the castle of the Louvre. In an incredibly short space of time the square of the Châtelet was covered with an immense and agitated crowd, principally of the lowest orders, armed with various, but all dreadful weapons, and seemingly rushing together in the wildest confusion and alarm. The apprehensions of the prisoners, and especially of Owen Tudor, were raised to the highest. But their consternation was changed as rapidly into transports of joy and expectation when the cries of terror from the masses below informed them that the city was attacked at several points by an Armagnac host!

The enthusiastic hopes of the prisoners and the panic fears of the multitude, allowed neither to weigh the probability of this intelligence. Taneguy Duchâtel, the terrible Taneguy, was storming the Porte Bordet; the Dauphin had already effected the seizure of the Gate of St. Germain, and an army, raging for blood and vengeance, was advancing into Paris! This was the information transmitted in frantic outcries to the prisoners on the summit of the Grand Châtelet. It was confirmed by the tumult and disorder of the multitude below, the rushing sweeps which they made from side to side of the square, like flocks of sheep hunted by dogs. The event seemed certain when large bodies of the Burgundian chivalry made their appearance, and seemed to halt in confusion, without knowing in which direction to make an effort. Owen recognised the banner of L'Isle Adam among those squadrons, and he soon perceived that it was joined by the Veau de Bar with nearly all his garrison of the Châtelet.

By and by, the crimson livery of the Boucherie mingled ~ely amidst the crowd. Efforts seemed made to reanimate

the multitude; orators addressed them from various points; and, finally, the arrival of a prodigious rabble, armed with grisly weapons of destruction, and escorting a singular leader with the most deafening shouts, seemed to restore the courage of the Parisians. Perrinet le Clerc, mounted on a charger richly caparisoned, that had no doubt belonged to some wealthy Armagnac knight, and dressed partly in his own robes of a scholar, but with a splendid cuirass on his breast, a mantle of crimson and sables on his shoulders, and the incongruous mitre of a bishop on his head, made his glorious appearance, attended more immediately by a body-guard of students armed with pikes.

Owen was surprised at the undaunted demeanour of this dictator, in a situation apparently of so much difficulty and danger. He harangued the people, upbraided them sharply with their cowardice, and, exhorting all who would defend the free and noble city of Paris for the Duke of Burgundy to follow him, moved off towards the supposed points of attack, pursued, after a short hesitation by the crowds, with furious shouts and acclamations. The Burgundian knights seemed to take the example; they went on with the multitude, taking care nevertheless not to allow their ranks to mingle; and in a short time not a single living creature, man, woman, or child, was to be discerned in the square of the Châtelet.

The anxiety with which the Armagnac prisoners awaited the result of this renewed effort for their deliverance amounted to the intensest agony. Only La Trimouille was sufficiently light-hearted or selfish to declare that, for the first time, he was glad of his captivity, since he was thus released from any danger in effecting his own release! The ill-timed jest had scarcely left his lips before the square of the Châtelet filled again as suddenly as it had emptied, and with nearly the same persons, with the exception that the regular forces of the Burgundians hung lightly on the rear of the rabble. Loud laughter and shouts of derision, with the pointing of innumerable and scornful fingers at the dense crowd of prisoners on the roof of the Châtelet, announced that the mob returned in a good humour, and consequently that the attempt of the Armagnacs, if any was made, had failed.

The latter clause was very reasonably a subject of doubt; the absence of the multitude had been so brief, and they returned so unruffled, and so complacently escorted by the knights of L'Isle Adam! A deadly chill whitened Owen's cheek when he suddenly recollected De Giac's plan of frightening the Parisians into cruelty! He perceived that th-

number of the prisoners, who had all pressed up, in the fever of expectation, on the battlements, excited the attention of the populace. He spoke of this to those around him, and advised that some of them should retire; but the general anxiety and curiosity was too intense to suffer this arrangement. The imprudent audacity of La Trimouille, who imagined himself secure on his elevation, crowned the mischief. He displayed his courage by making gestures of contempt and defiance at the multitude, which speedily produced a storm of hisses, rising rapidly into a general and deafening uproar.

In the midst of this tumult and agitation, a voice like the articulate roaring of a wild beast yelled from amidst the crowd, "Let us kill these dogs of Armagnacs, that keep us in such constant trouble and starvation! Death, death to them who kill our children with hunger! They will else kill us: see what a number they are!"

It seemed as if this voice merely gave utterance to the gathered sentiment of the whole multitude, so terrifically and universally was the cry repeated, till "Death to the Armagnacs!" silenced the jangle of the affrighted belfries of Paris!

"'Death to the constable! To the Palais!—he is there!' 'To the chancellor!—he is in St. Magloire!'" shrieked voices from various quarters.

"To ALL THE ARMAGNACS!" shouted tones whose awful utterance seemed to wreak the fury of a tempest in human sound. "Death to all the Armagnacs!" was instantly echoed in maddening uproar, as it almost appeared, over all Paris, over the entire city!

"There are Armagnacs in For l'Evêque, in St. Magliore, in St. Martin des Champs, in the Temple, in the Abbey of Tyron, and in St. Eloi!" said the executioner Capeluche, in the methodical, unimpassioned tone of a ready-reckoner.

"And in the Grand Châtelet!" interrupted the direful voice of Simon Caboche; and he pointed a vast poleaxe up to its tower. The very masonry seemed to tremble with the start of the gazing prisoners!

"There is the Petit Châtelet, too," said Capeluche, coldly, "but I thought we need only reckon what is out of sight!"

"Go on who will to the Palais! to For l'Evêque! to St. Martin! St. Magliore! St. Eloi! the Temple! and Tyron! —the two Châtelets are mine!" yelled Simon Caboche. "Come on, my boys!—Remember Renaud; none will hinder us—the knights are with us!"

"What can possibly be meant? They are rolling up to our gates!" said La Trimouille.

' universal massacre, nothing less, is meant!—Art thou

the familiar of Huéline de Troye, and knowest not this?" returned Owen with the bitterest scorn, and yet with utter despair at his heart.

"Thou art so in—in reality—I do but boast! and dost thou know this?" said the courtier, whitening as if already bled to death beneath the axes of the Cabochiens.

"The Veau de Bar parleys with them—perchance he yet retains some knightly faith!" said Owen, straining his eyes, for the confusion and uproar were too great to hear anything distinctly from below. The Lord of L'Isle Adam and the new provost seemed to be reasoning with the Cabochiens, and persuading them to peace. But the voice of Simon was only too audible in reply: "Curse on your justice, your pity, your reasonableness! Cursed of God be he who shall have pity on these false Armagnac traitors, these Englishmen! They are but dogs! they have destroyed, they have ruined, the fair realm of France! They have sold us to the English—they have killed my son!"

The Veau de Bar again spoke, in a low voice, obviously much shaken and disordered by the roar of popular fury that followed Simon's oration. At this instant the mendicant of the parvis glided up; he shook a blank parchment, signed with a name and a broad seal, in the face of the Burgundian leaders. He spoke to them—and his words seemed to remove all scruples. "My friends," said the Veau de Bar, "do as it pleases ye!—But how is that?"

"I am the executioner of Paris!" returned a voice. "I command and entreat all men to aid me in executing the king's justice on criminals taken in the fact! Death to all the Armagnacs!"

"Give us the keys of your fortress, provost, and turn your back for ten minutes!" said Simon Caboche.

"I may not; the Châtelet is the lock of Paris!" replied the Veau. "Speak reasonably, Simon!"

"Yield us the prisoners, then!" returned Caboche. "It is not safe to keep them here in the heart of Paris, close on the Boucherie!"

"Will ye swear, then, to convey them safely to the Bastille?" said the Veau de Bar.

"Their bodies?—yea!" replied Simon, and a peal of furious laughter applauded.

"Look to it, then!" said the Burgundian chief. "I hold myself quit of all harm that may happen to my prisoners when once they have passed my gates!" Who says that jesuitry was invented by the disciples of Loyola?

Deafening shouts responded, and the butchers followed

the steps of the new Prevost of Paris, while the rest of the mob, yelling the names of the various prisons of Paris, and exhorting one another to rush to them and destroy their miserable inmates, foamed off in various directions.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MASSACRE OF THE ARMAGNACS.

THE Cabochiens halted at the gates of the Châtelet, while the Veau de Bar entered it with the understanding that he was to order the surrender of the prisoners. But at least those in the great keep were aware of the projects entertained, and were by no means inclined to confide themselves to the promised conveyance. Owen Tudor had communicated his suspicions, his certainties, to his fellow-prisoners, which were confirmed by the movements of the multitude, and the dreadful outcries that reached them. And into all but La Trimouille he infused some portion of his own determination of resistance, the desperate courage and resolve of his heroic blood. When the Veau de Bar arrived with some archers to bring his prisoners from the keep, he found the drawbridge torn off its hinges and cast into the ditch below, and by that means all passage between the donjon and its exterior works destroyed. At the only door admitting into the prison, Owen Tudor stood armed with an axe, and surrounded by a throng of his fellow-prisoners armed with such weapons as chance presented, or that some of them had concealed; with stones and beams torn from the walls of the dungeon.

The prevost's order to the prisoner to yield themselves, under the mockery of being conveyed to the Bastille, wrung from Owen Tudor so overwhelming a storm of reproach and execration at his breach of knightly faith, that the Veau de Bar was struck with shame and relenting. "It is not I; it is the accursed mob: it is De Giac!" he replied.

"Go, then, and bid them win us ere they wear us; they shall find that we are men, and not sheep!" shouted the Welsh knight.

"It is not intended—no harm is intended—unless ye provoke the rabble by resistance," said the provost, stammeringly. "I, for one, abhor the thought—but I am only one."

"Give us arms to defend ourselves, we are many;" returned Owen.

"Ah, believe him not; listen to no parley!" said La Trimouille, arriving at the instant from the battlements,

where he had remained in stupefied terror. "They are hacking to pieces all the prisoners that are turned out of the Châtelet!—I have seen it."

"Do what ye can to defend yourselves; it is their affair to slaughter ye, not mine!" said the Veau de Bar, after an instant's appalling pause. "And if ye need arms, here is my sword. Soldiers, lend what ye can spare; the armoury is well furnished below."

The men-at-arms, with the natural sympathy of disciplined forces against mobs, eagerly took the hint. Not satisfied with flinging over their own weapons, many ran to the armoury of the Châtelet, and continued to supply the prisoners until they themselves demanded no more, or at least until the number of captives within the fortress unconscious of their danger or incapable of making resistance, was exhausted. A gory heap lay around the gates of the Châtelet; the Cabochiens were growing clamorous for more victims, and threatening to break them in, when the provost reappeared. "Gentlemen," he said, with a pleasantness only possible to a Frenchman under such circumstances, "the Armagnacs in the great donjon positively decline the honour ye purpose them. They have arms concealed, and are prepared to resist under a good captain—the Chevalier Sauvage. Wherefore I exhort you to go elsewhere, where throats are to be cut without trouble!"

"The Chevalier Sauvage!" shouted Caboche. "He who would ever again eat my bread help me to break open these gates! He is in the Châtelet; we have no occasion to seek him elsewhere!"

"It is not necessary, Simon," replied the Veau de Bar. "Let them be thrown open! Hurt not my Châtelet, and do what you will with whomsoever ye may find within it."

With this permission, the Cabochiens poured into the interior of the Châtelet, while the provost joined his troops and the rest of the Burgundian chivalry in the square. These forces seemed merely stationed to observe and protect the savage deeds of the rabble.

The Cabochiens soon made their way to the donjon moat, and to their great surprise found that all means of access were removed, and, instead of unarmed and panic-struck prisoners, a determined and well-weaponed soldiery awaited them! Simon Caboche led the infuriated bands that rushed round the rampart of the moat in the hope of finding some means to cross it. Owen Tudor, whose courage had created him, without any ceremonial, general of the besieged, stood in the doorway

swayed by one impulse, however peaceful; and this rabble of Paris were all athirst for blood, and armed with the most dreadful instruments of slaughter. Axes, mallets, javelins, halberds, pikes, staves, ponderous hammers, knives, lances, swords, glared in every direction in the noonday sun, still covered with the blood and brains of the slaughtered Armagnacs! No mob but a Parisian one could have made such despatch: already sixteen hundred defenceless men had perished!

This sight, which struck terror to the hearts of many of his companions, raised the courage of Owen Tudor to a species of sublime recklessness. His prophecies stood him now indeed in good stead. He seemed to himself to stand face to face with destiny, and with the assurance of triumph in his heart! His undaunted demeanour revived the energies of all, even of La Trimouille, who with a trembling hand took a spear and fainted away on one of the battlements. But the majority of the prisoners looked at Owen, and caught the inspiration of hope or despair, none could say which, that shone in his eyes, and unflinchingly awaited the movements of their enemies.

And, in fact, during the whole of that terrrific day, whose hours passed as unnoticed as centuries over the tombs of the dead, the prisoners of the Châtelet foiled all the desperate and unwearied attacks of their besiegers. Ladders were placed at innumerable points: innumerable wretches, animated by the mad courage of a Parisian populace, and by the wildest fury, mounted them to the assault. They fell again in a species of human shower, hurled over, not unfrequently, on the pikes and spears of their friends. The carnage was horrible on the side of the populace, who, having no missile weapons, could not hurt their enemies from below. The Burgundian archers and knights, though frequently importuned by De Giac, would not interfere. The horrors already perpetrated filled them with shame and terror, and the supernatural courage of the Chevalier Sauvage and his companions extorted admiration at least from their knightly spectators.

Finally, the rabble grew weary of their fruitless efforts, and yielded to the exhaustion of their day's fatigues. Simon could no longer prevail, even upon his Cabochiens, to renew the assault; it was growing night, and they declared that they must rest. But he easily induced them to remain and bivouac in the square, to prevent the possible escape of the prisoners. The Petit Châtelet was in the hands of the rabble, and there was good hope that their courage would revive with rest, and with the arrival of the reinforcements of massacrers engaged

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[illegible]

[illegible]

the fraternity of slaughter, and all by the hand of the minstreless of the Boucherie. With an unflagging, unwearied iteration to each and all, Huéline continually repeated a prayer that wherever they found the Chevalier Sauvage they would bring him to her alive and unhurt—that she might put him to death, she said, herself, with refinements of torture! Whatever she might receive in reward from the Burgundians, she solemnly swore, should be the payment of whoever performed the service; and the dreadful associates promised to make every effort to reserve her the vengeance she demanded! During the whole day of massacre she had accordingly remained in the Boucherie, expecting with incredible agony the arrival of the Armagnac knight, or news of his destruction. Neither reached her; and, although tidings of the heroic resistance of the prisoners of the Châtelet entered the Boucherie, it was neither announced nor known, until the messengers arrived for food, that the besieged were commanded, and the besiegers repulsed, by Owen Tudor.

And now Huéline came amidst those blood-weltering bands, seemingly an almost indifferent spectatress of the horrible sights that surrounded her. There was even something of joy and illumination in her countenance! It was ascribed to very different causes by the multitude, but it was the hope, infused by her lover's valour, of his redemption and his glory, that consoled the secret degradation and self-condemnation in the heart of the minstreless. The mob received her with transports of affection and exultation, for they loved her greatly, and Parisians do not refuse to women the homage of the glory they achieve, merely because they are women! On every side her attention was claimed to some signal work of vengeance that might comfort the anguish she was supposed to suffer in the doom of her betrothed. Among the rest, a blaze of many torches solicited her notice to three dead carcasses, stripped, but so covered with mud and hideous wounds that they were scarcely recognisable, fastened together by the heels, and dragged about the square in triumph by a rabble of boys. They were the bodies of the Constable d'Armagnac, of the Chancellor Henri de Marle, and of Remonnet de la Guerre.

It was at the moment when Huéline cast her quivering eyes on this spectacle, beneath a strong glare of light, that the general of the prisoners recognised her, even from that depth of distance. She was surrounded by the most horrible crowd of gory wretches that ever the human gaze was cast upon, but who were crowned with wreaths of roses! The associations

of that tremendous instant never again departed from the image of Huéline de Troye in the memory of Owen Tudor!

Huéline was accompanied by Gules Caboche, and together they brought some special viands for the Master-Chief; Simon ate, holding the morsels between his forefinger and thumb, with difficulty preventing the human blood that bathed his hand from mingling in the repast. He detailed the dreadful occurrences of the massacre, and of his own fruitless siege, to a horrified listener, who yet found matter of rejoicing amidst all the agonized sentiments the story aroused. And her eyes flashed with a strange brilliancy that deceived more than Simon Caboche; and her entreaties to him not to hazard his life in any farther struggle—to leave her at least one protector—attracted the attention of the Veau de Bar. The reproaches of the Chevalier Sauvage haunted his memory, and were heightened by the compassion and admiration the young knight's valour roused. He made his way to Simon's fire, on his massive steed, and, saluting the minstreless with great courtesy, entreated her to prevail on the Master-Chief to desist from his enterprise, to spare this last little handful of men, and enable him to fulfil his plight of safety to the Chevalier Sauvage.

Huéline dared not directly respond to this appeal. "Nay, messire," she murmured, "I was the betrothed of Renaud Caboche—I am the daughter of Jean de Troye! and if you were sincere—are you not castellain of this royal fortress—*might not your garrison resume its custody?*"

The obtuse Veau (or Calf) of Bar missed the meaning of this innuendo. "The duke's orders are positive—we may not interfere—the *milice royale* are to do as they please!" he replied.

"It is well reminded; but I marvel you ask not for your father, Huéline?" said Caboche. "Did you expect to find him with us? Demand him, in your turn, of this new provost of ours, for we have searched for him in every rat-hole of the Châtelet—and found him not."

"In all the oubliettes, in the Cradle, the Paradise, the Bed of Nettles, the Don't-you-like-the-look-of-me, the Frozen Hole, the Well, and the Charnel," said the executioner Capeluche, who happened to be near, and was twisting one of his long curls into a more graceful ring.

"De Giac told me he was in one of them; I never saw him!" said the provost, vehemently.

"But I always thought there was some mistake, and imagined that Jean de Troye was strangled with the rest, in the

Armagnac time," continued Capeluche. "At all events, he is not in the Châtelet—unless he has been removed from his old quarters!"

Marvellous as it appears, even these dreary news scarcely seemed to trouble Huéline at all. She had reached that pinnacle of mental agony which, as in physical suffering, produces insensibility. She seated herself calmly at the bivouac of Simon Caboche; and yet there was something in her wild, beautiful eyes that induced the Burgundian knight to linger. He moved his steed near her, and strove to enter into discourse with the marvellous syren, whose renown rendered her an object of curiosity with the whole faction.

Meanwhile the agents who directed the wrath of the Parisians exerted themselves to restore the courage and determination of the rabble. De Giac sought out Perrinet le Clerc, who was parading the quarter of the University with his mob, and a statue which the scholars intended to inaugurate to his honour borne before him. It is said to be identical with one that in future times puzzled antiquaries under the name of the "Giant of the Rue de l'Ours!"

A few words exchanged between De Giac and Perrinet induced the scholastic tribune to change the route of his triumph, and order it to the square of the Châtelet. He arrived in the full blaze of his glory, amidst his acclaiming rabble, to whose applause the presence of Huéline gave an extreme zest. But a brief period had wrought a wonderful change in the scholar of the Sorbonne: he was now the despotic, imperious demagogue, and, in the arrogance of his mob-sway, scarcely admitted an equal even in the Master-Chief of the Boucherie.

His first words were of reproof and superiority, though addressed to Caboche. He wished to show Huéline that the time was approaching when she might boldly defy the wrath of the Cabochiens, and yield to the dictates of her tenderness for himself. He severely blamed Simon for the reckless waste he had made of his followers' lives—his unsoldierly and unskilful combinations. "Life of my life!" he exclaimed, for Perrinet swore by himself now, "well may these nobles and knights laugh at you, and call you a madman, Simon, unfit to command men of prowess! Instead of clambering to assail these rats in their hole, and have your noses bitten off for your pains, why did ye not *fire it from below?*"

The wrath of the Master-Chief was boiling up at the arrogance of the address; but this last suggestion chimed in harmoniously with the stronger passion in his heart.

"How might that be?—I thought of it, and gathered fuel; but this false new provost of ours swears, if I attempt to set fire to his fortress, he will charge me and my men!" he replied.

"I did not say fire, I said, smoke them out!" replied Perrinet. "Nay, I have an order for it no Burgundian captain will dispute! Let us fill the stone moat with straw, sulphur, and stinkpots, that will smoulder, and fill the donjon with such air that human lungs cannot breathe—and make ready below to receive our guests on our pikes."

This idea was seized with so much readiness by Simon Caboche, that he almost instantly began to make preparations to execute it. The Veau de Bar seemed not to venture on opposition; and the whole interior of the Châtelet, excepting the keep, was already in the hands of the Cabochiens. The order to collect bundles of straw, wood, pitch, wool, and other fuel likely to make a suffocating smoke, was given, and hundreds were instantly engaged in busy co-operation. Perrinet took advantage of Simon's absorption in this labour to address some compliment to Huéline on the triumphant termination of their labours—on the prospect of complete vengeance which opened. She made no reply, but continued gazing with wide eyes at the summit of the Châtelet. Luckily the tribune was interrupted in the midst of his amorous harangue, which might have completed the confusion of Huéline's thoughts into madness, by an unexpected address to himself.

It was a very singular sight, if the universal occupation of the men of Paris, at this period, was not borne in mind, to behold women carrying a bier. But some half-dozen matrons appeared crossing the square of the Châtelet, supporting some such vehicle of the dead, covered with black cloth, on which lay a corpse, very cleanly washed and shrouded—the corpse of an old man. An aged woman, in deep widow's mourning, accompanied it, who directed the procession through the hideous ranks of the rabble, until it approached very near to Perrinet le Clerc. And then the aghast tribune recognised, in the disfigured corpse, his father; in the solitary mourner, his mother.

"Yes, Perrinet, it is thy father," said the old woman, whose face had lost all its commonplace character in the dread heavings of her soul. "Set down the body, friends; I have brought it here, that I may curse him in its presence—that *he* may know I shared not the parricide's treachery! Look here, thou pitiless wretch! it was thou that mangled thy father

thus, not the enemies whose hoofs battered him into the clay!" And the miserable widow raised the pall that concealed the horribly trampled and still bleeding corpse of Perrinet le Feron. "Glut thine eyes with the sight—and may it be for ever before thee, in bed and at board, and in the hell whither my curses hurl thee down! Wert thou Pope of Rome, thy poor father said—but I tell thee, king of murderers!—My God! forgive me for having given birth to this parricide only when his guilt is punished, though that be for all eternity! Monster! thou didst slay thy father to inherit his gold: come and take it. It lies all scattered about the house, the doors are unbarred; thou hast but to plunge thy dagger in thy mother's heart, and all is thine!"

"Wretched old fool!—take her away. I slew him not; it was his own headstrong madness," said Perrinet, but obviously much confused.

"Curse me too, mother! My name is Huéline de Troye!" said the minstreless, in a low monotonous tone.

"Curse thee? No, thou needst not curses; thou hast only to live," replied the widow, with a dreadful glance. "Seductress, live! I demand no other vengeance on thee."

"What she has done, she has done well, and shall do better still," said Simon Caboche, with a glare of hatred at Perrinet. "How say you, master scholar, is this thine old Armagnac father, indeed? How likes he the sport?"

"Where is thy young Burgundian son, master butcher?" How likest thou the sport?" returned the widow of Le Feron.

"Mother, go home; I will come there anon," said Perrinet le Clerc. "Simon, let us to work at broiling the Armagnacs. I am ready for this or any other deed that hath no savour of mercy in it."

The wretched mother, and more wretched wife, looked at him with one last dreadful anguished look, while the tears slowly trickled from her hollow eyes, and then with her friends resumed their dismal march towards the Cemetery of the Innocents. By this time several cartloads of straw, pitch, wool, and other materials adapted to make a smouldering fire, arrived in the square of the Châtelet. The two popular chiefs now directed the carriages to proceed to the fortress, and themselves followed, to complete the arrangements for driving the Armagnacs from their stronghold. Loupgarou, raising his habitual cry, and, in fact, the only one he seemed capable of uttering—"Vengeance!" prepared to follow in the great mass of zealous volunteers who crowded after Perrinet a

Caboche, when he was suddenly clutched by the belt, and drawn back.

It was the executioner Capeluche that detained him. "Tarry, my dear son, my favourite pupil," he said, in a low, keen whisper. "Do not leave me. I love to see thy dear knife at work; but I do not intend to follow these fools. We have sufficient glory for one day; and, my child, it is in such times as these that poor men should lay up little stores for bad ones. I have not thine enthusiasm of youth, 'tis true—I cannot give myself up altogether to mere killing; but ah, if thou could see how I have feathered my nest in the Cour des Miracles! Come, I will put a little thing in thy way. Thou hearest how the treasures of Perrinet le Feron are lying about—how his poor widow has no longer occasion for them. Stupid as thou art, thou must see that his son deserves not to inherit him. Let us hasten, while the afflicted mother is at the cemetery, and carry off those coffers which will only serve to remind her painfully of her husband's misfortune."

"Master! thou hast always said that I only wanted practice to be worthy to be thy successor; I must go and practise," returned Loupgarou, breaking away. "Heap gold if thou wilt! wild beasts need but blood; and my very name tells men I am one!"

"Ah, 'tis a sensible lad, after all!—and I can do it very well myself, and need share with no one," said the executioner, musingly, and, after a moment of profound thought, muttering, "There is no time to be lost," he drew his knife, and disappeared from the crowd.

No word of this horrible dialogue reached her ears, yet Huéline was watching with intense anxiety for the moment when the executioner, who was very near, should take it into his head to remove to a distance. The Veau de Bar, weary of her silence, had twice given his horse the signal of movement, and twice, with a mysterious but most impressive gesture, Huéline had detained him. She now arose to speak to him, when a new interruption arrived.

"Art thou not avenged, Huéline? Is this enough?" said the voice of De Giac, close beside her.

"No!" she said, after an instant of pause, "it is not special enough; he perishes with too many—with some that have not merited this direful doom. Go, and offer mercy to them all, if they will surrender only the Chevalier Sauvage. His blood may content the wrath of Perrinet, of Simon, and of thee!"

"It is true; we should show some mercy. I will report that such is the mercy of the betrothed of Renaud Caboche!"

replied the mendicant; and he pushed on eagerly through the crowd to the Châtelet.

"And now, Guy de Bar," said Huéline, rising with the fervour and inspiration of a pythoness, "if thou wouldst not become for ever infamous, for ever branded with the guilt of this horrible massacre—for I am a minstrel, and I tell thee, I will make thy name eternally hideous with the tale of thy faithlessness—save the Chevalier Sauvage!"

"How might it be? I would hazard my own life cheerfully," replied the Veau de Bar.

"There are ladders ready against the walls of the Châtelet—the only implacable enemies of Owen Tudor are within the walls," replied Huéline. "Draw your squadrons around, as if to protect the designs of the Cabochiens. *I* will find you some trusty wretch to mount and prevail on the prisoners to accept your protection, and descend to it! While the Cabochiens believe them smothering in the smoke, and are busied in their infernal task within, you may escort the redeemed ones in safety to the Bastille."

"I will do it; I will myself mount to give them assurance; 'tis not the first time that I have climbed a castle wall, and this base and insolent rabble shall yet be baulked!" replied the Veau de Bar. "But, minstreless! distract the attention of these men with roses on their heads, by singing some lay of triumph—some of your Burgund ditties."

Huéline mechanically nodded compliance, and resumed her seat at the bivouac. "Gules," she said, with singular wildness, to the poor girl, who was gazing with all her soul in her eyes at the tower above, "thou art not cheerful, and yet the moment of vengeance is nigh! Hast thou not heard the monks say how Deborah sang the song of victory?—Let us, too, sing."

And she commenced one of her own ancient roundels, a song of defiance to the Armagnacs, in a voice which speedily attracted a large circle of listeners.

"Alack! the knights will not leave a possibility of escape, if he is there!" sighed Gules, almost aloud, as the cavalry of the Veau de Bar took post around the Châtelet.

Huéline continued her lay, but her eyes gleamed with strange fixedness on the battlements of the donjon. None of the defenders appeared on it; the preparations in the interior attracted all their attention. Suddenly a helmet gleamed over the summit in the very bright moonlight, and a stifled shriek, that yet scarcely interrupted her song, burst from the very heart of Huéline.

It was at this instant that Messire De Giac made the humane and considerate proposal, across the preparations in the moat, which Huéline had suggested to him, and in her name. It was not received with the politeness to be expected, at least by Owen Tudor. Some of the prisoners, frantic with the horror of the fate that menaced them, showed signs of compliance. But Owen Tudor, wielding the axe which had wrought so much in their behalf, declared that he would slay the first man that approached him from one side or the other. Simon Caboche stood ready with a torch on the opposite bank of the moat, which was now filled with combustibles and smouldering fuel. He was waxing impatient for a decision, and so was Perrinet le Clerc, who continued to laugh and rail at his old opponent with a merciless bitterness only to be accounted for by the delirium of his hatred and of the universal madness. Matters were approaching a terrific crisis: and La Trimouille had timorously implored Owen Tudor to sacrifice himself to the general good, with a faint threat at the end that else—he knew not what would happen, when Rhys ap Goronwy tumbled headlong down a flight of stone stairs leading from the battlements where he had been left sentinel. He spoke some words in his wild guttural to his lord, who, making a terrific spring, cleared a way through the prisoners, gained the stairs, and disappeared with his equally rapid squire. The Cabochiens lost all patience; innumerable torches were thrown; and the slimy ditch below became illuminated like a circular furnace with the straw, and wood, and pitch prepared to make the smoulder. The wretched Armagnacs fled in a struggling, shrieking mass upward to the battlements; and in a brief period the whole building became involved in clouds of rank and suffocating smoke.

The Cabochiens did not retire until they were themselves in danger of sharing the fate of their victims by remaining in the fortress. They continued to guard the outlets as closely as possible for a considerable time, while the whole square was involved in the obscurity caused by the deadly fumigation. No one offered any obstruction to this merciless deed: the Burgundian horsemen themselves had retired from the Châtelet, to take up their quarters at the Bastille.

Huéline was seated, with a smile of delirious exultation, on an empty cask of wine, listening in a silent agony of triumph and joy to the ravings of hatred from Simon Caboche, to the disappointed wonder of Perrinet at the non-appearance of the prisoners on the battlements, to the tranquil observation of De Giac, that they were possibly unable. And two ages approached the group almost at the same time.

One was Capeluche. "I must show myself as soon and as prominently as possible, since the old woman was such a fool, and returned so much sooner than I expected!" he was saying to himself, uneasily striving to clean his knife in the sheath. Blood flowed over it with the effort.

The other was the Veau de Bar. "All is well, damsel de Troye!" he said, with great significance. "I have come to observe that my Châtelet is not fired: the rats are fairly smoked out of it."

"What is well, messires?" said the executioner, drawing near with the familiarity sanctioned by his community of crime, and striving to impress the fact of his presence on Perrinet with a deep bend to the tribune.

At this moment the lower loop-holes of the Châtelet lighted up with a dull red glare, like fiery eyes glaring through its walls into the square.

"We are making the Châtelet too warm to hold them, Capeluche!" said the Master-Chief, laughing gleefully. "But do not alarm messire the provost: his fortress is in no danger: it is only the good stone ditches that are filled with fire."

"All the saints! did I not tell ye that Jean de Troye was removed to the dungeons below the keep!—that there are bars in them to admit air from the moat!—and, consequently, you have baked and suffocated him! Ah, demoiselle Huéline! you were so much engaged, you would not take the hint when I said—*unless he is removed from his old quarters!*"

Not one of all that multitude, that had listened unmoved to the dying yells of sixteen hundred murdered men, heard without bristling looks the shriek of the daughter of Jean de Troye!

Let us draw the curtain over the remainder of this scene; over the terrific spectacle which all Paris continued to present during the space of many days. It is but one drawn from innumerable masses—this group of anguish, guilt, and horror! During many days the city continued in the hands of the rabble, and was treated in all respects as one taken by storm and delivered over to pillage and death. It was sufficient to cry "There goes an Armagnac!" to procure the destruction of any one; and Capeluche and his associates of the roses confounded all under the name who were defenceless and had anything they desired to possess. A pause came at last; but it was the pause of exhaustion. The Burgundian chiefs dared not attempt to enchain the wild beast they had loosened. Luckily, the progress of a terrible malady—caused by th

mad excesses to which the populace abandoned themselves; by the pestilential exhalations from the carcasses of the murdered, to whom the fury of civil hatred denied even graves; by the terrific agitations shared by the whole mass of the Parisians—came to the aid of those who had now the task of restoring tranquillity. The Maladie Ardente had decimated the population of Paris ere its subsidence, and the reviving mutinous disposition of the people induced the Duke of Burgundy to come and take solemn possession of his conquest.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JOHN THE FEARLESS.

THE good city of Paris, so lately the theatre of a pitiless massacre, became one of scarcely paralleled festivity and magnificence, to welcome the arrival of the beloved Duke of Burgundy. The joyfulness of this event was, indeed, a little qualified by intelligence that he was accompanied by the queen-regent, as Isabeau de Bavière now solemnly styled herself. That despotic princess was both hated and feared by the Parisians; and it was well understood that their sentiments were fervently reciprocated.

But information that he is expected to rejoice always sets the Parisian enthusiastically in the mood, for the moment. Moreover, splendid spectacles were to be witnessed; and that was enough for the reckless and light-hearted populace. Even the Maladie Ardente was forgotten. It was a handsome occasion for people to show themselves off as survivors! And there were substantial reasons for the satisfaction of a considerable portion of the Parisians. The advance of the duke with his powerful army dispersed the numerous bands of plunderers that ravaged the environs of the city, and restrained the ceaseless incursions of the Armagnac garrisons. The wealthier classes of citizens, groaning under the tyranny of the mob and their chiefs, hoped that the duke would interpose, at least to prevent their total ruin. The popular leaders themselves, in fact, almost the whole populace, were in eager expectation of the rewards due to their services in restoring Paris to the Burgundians. There was scarcely a ruffian who had cut an Armagnac throat but expected some distinguished mark of gratitude from Duke John.

Accordingly the whole city was in a delighted uproar. All the bells of Paris rang in joyful unison; no longer with the striking notes of the tocsin. Tapestry and flowers

decked every window. Those who had lost the most were compelled, by dread of the populace, to exhibit the liveliest signs of satisfaction. As a general rule, it might even be known which quarter had suffered the most in the massacre by the excess of their rejoicings in its result! The city of Paris voted a large sum to be laid out in triumphal pageants, which was principally levied among the relatives and friends of those whose mangled carcasses might be said, without metaphor, to strew the path of the conqueror. Master Roman de la Rose was at length employed in a manner more suitable to his genius than his professional pursuits. He had renewed his acquaintance with the Boucherie, and, through the influence of its chiefs, obtained the office of composing the open-air interludes which were to diversify the duke's passage from the Bastille of St. Antoine, where he was to make his entry, to the Louvre, in which he was expected to take up his residence with the queen.

The open space within the gate, and the fields around the ramparts, were covered with an immense crowd. The bishop of Paris, with all his clergy; the University, with all its scholars; the parliaments and courts of justice, with all their judges, counsellors, clerks, and officials; the provost of Paris, with all his civil and military functionaries, commanded by two lieutenants; the provost of the merchants, with all the guilds and crafts of the city arrayed in various liveries, under various appropriate banners; the sheriffs of Paris, with their underlings, among whom Capeluche the executioner was conspicuous, as the dignity of his office demanded: all in robes of estate, furred, and richly decorated with official insignia, and nearly all on horseback, excepting the dignitaries of the University, who bestrode mules: a vast rabble, wearing, to a man, woman, or child, the red sautre of St. Andrew—composed the mass. Thanks to the zeal of the Cabochiens and the enthusiasm of Capeluche, there was scarcely a single Armagnac among all the throng.

The provost of the merchants had a noble present to make the duke, in the shape of a fine robe of violet velvet, embroidered in precious stones with his devices. The arms of Paris, a ship decorated most sumptuously with silken sails and ropes, and painted of a beautiful purple colour, hung by gilded chains in the gateway of St. Antoine. In it were five mermaids, women naked to their waists, with long scaly fish-tails so intertwisted as to form the letters of the word Paris, who were to be lowered in their aërial barge on the duke's arrival to offer the congratulations of the good city, and utter

separate harangues in praise of the five great virtues in which John the Fearless and Isabeau de Bavière were supposed, by the generosity of rhetoric, to excel—Justice, Mercy, Chastity, Faith, and Religion.

Most conspicuous among the trades of Paris, both by merit and their flaring red garbs, was the confraternity of the butchers. All the twenty chiefs of the Boucherie were present; in the midst of whom was Simon Caboche, like a general surrounded by his staff. The dark, brooding, lowering visage of the Master-Chief was at great odds with his gay costume; but even the sister of Renaud wore not mourning weeds on this joyous occasion. Gules's aspect, however, for one so lively by temperament, was singularly clouded and anxious. Perhaps this was accounted for by the circumstance that she was aiding her father to support the enfeebled form of the daughter of Jean de Troye. Huéline was there, arrayed in deep mourning. Little of her could be seen; she was closely enveloped in her dark mantle and robe; but her manner seemed like that of one new risen from a bed of sickness. And in fact she had not long revived from an attack of the Maladie Ardente; or else the delirious fever of mind that preyed upon her was mistaken for it by the mediciners.

Among the eminent personages of the University, certainly the most conspicuous one, in the eyes of the people, was Master Perrinet le Clerc. He was still in the highest popular favour, the idol of the mob, through whom he had constituted himself supreme dictator of Paris. In the intoxication of revenge and hatred, his deeds so far exceeded in atrocity those of all the other leaders, that not even Simon Caboche could dispute the sway with him. But Perrinet's natural selfishness prevented him from ever making a thorough-paced demagogue. He cultivated his dreadful popularity as a means of forcing on his own ambitious views, which were still directed to the church. In this mood, he commanded rather than requested of the University the honour of representing it, and of delivering its harangue of welcome to the duke. He had resumed his scholastic robes, and now appeared among the doctors, who regarded him with mingled horror and fear, prepared to deliver a discourse in their name, that was to mingle adulation of the duke with a statement of his own services, an ideal of his power, and an allusion to the rewards he expected, which, thus enforced, could not fail to be understood. Perrinet had taken care that the massacre included three possessors of the richest bishoprics in France.

Let us now give a glance at the executioner, Capeluche, to

whom the transition is easy. It seemed that his circumstances were much improved by his exertions in the public weal. He was apparently enabled to gratify his passion for fine dress to the highest degree of luxury and splendour. He was clothed in a farrago of magnificent patchwork, the most showy pieces of dress worn by various distinguished victims, from which the stains of blood were very skilfully obliterated, without much damage to the stuffs. There was nothing unbecoming Capeluche's position in this prodigality of decoration. Besides his dignity as executioner of Paris, he commanded a hideous band of murderers and plunderers, known by the graceful title of the Handmaidens of the Place de Grève; and he was the devoted and intimate friend of Perrinet le Clerc, to whom his adhesion gave the ascendency over the rest of the Parisian demagogues.

"How beautiful Monsieur de Paris is!—I mean, in his dress," said a girl, who was gazing in great admiration at Capeluche, to one of her neighbours. "Ah, they may well say that fine feathers make fine birds! He seems to me by far the handsomest person present."

"And how gracefully he kills people!" replied her companion. "I saw him bury a Jew alive, in the Hog Market, for spitting at the great image of Our Lady at the corner of the Rue des Orfèvres. And he took him to the grave as politely as if to a bath of new milk, which they say my lady, the wicked old queen, uses every morning to keep her complexion clear."

"Dost thou see how they look at me, Loupgarou, all the pretty girls?" said Capeluche, putting his arm affectionately round his varlet's neck. "They do not even glance at thee, though thou art so much younger. It is because thou didst not take my advice in season, because thou art evidently a beggar—and there is nothing that women hate more than poverty. But why art thou so sullen of late, my son, that one never gets a pleasant word or look from thee—though thy face is really not one that needs any addition to its ugliness?"

"Since thou art so rich, why dost thou not let me be executioner in thy place?" returned Loupgarou, abruptly.

"Ah! thou art ambitious! Well, it is a high-blooded and most princely passion," said Capeluche. "I acknowledge that I am rich enough for my moderate wants; but Loupgarou, my child, consider, what should I do for amusement if I had nobody to hang, draw, quarter, boil, bury, muti[1] rip, and break on the wheel?"

"But thou dost not even teach me my trade! Thou hast never yet let me behead any one!" said Loupgarou, ferociously.

"Ill-humoured thing! Why, thou art so awkward, thou wouldst disgrace our whole profession," said Capeluche, playfully chucking his assistant's shapeless chin. "And let me add, in confidence, my child, thou never wilt be fit to hold the office of executioner of Paris, where the people are such excellent judges. Bear that in mind, and, if thou hast any secret hopes against me, cease to cherish them. Thou art only fit to be hangman in some petty bailliewick or country town, where, provided you get a man's head off, nobody cares how!"

"It shall be seen!" muttered Loupgarou, between his fangs.

"Undoubtedly it shall be seen, sir!—you are speaking of my grand interlude at the Boucherie?" said Roman de la Rose, who was bustling through the crowd, and scarcely noticed who spoke, in the absorption of his vanity. "It is certain that my redoubtable lord will be highly gratified by the spectacle. How delighted I am with the appearance of the mermaids! I had a thousand candidates for the honour of representing them! But the duke is so amorous and gentle a prince, that it is no wonder he may take a fancy to one of them, or to them all, especially considering the novelty of the scaly tails! He must want novelty—he is such a rover, the good duke! And no wonder the women like him! I doubt, after all, if Venus so greatly preferred Adonis to Mars! What say you, ladies? Ah, you laugh; that is enough."

"But is there to be a giant at the Boucherie, messire? And will it not frighten one too much?" said one of the girls that were giggling, with perfect simplicity.

"Of course there is to be a giant at the Boucherie!" replied Roman; "but first the duke has to see a lovely representation of the late massacre, in the square of the Châtelet, and all our brave Maillotins are to appear with their maces and knives, and dance a delightful measure with wheatsheafs in their hands to signify how plenty and peace are restored to Paris. The giant is to represent the English, and St. Andrew is to come out of a sly corner and kill him, after a fine combat—and you all know how exhilarating that is, ladies? I forgot to mention the castle before the Boucherie, painted all over like paper, which the giant is to besiege; but you will all [illegible] by the word ROUEN over the battlements. And then

St. Andrew is to be crowned with roses, and he is to make his horse—a real live horse, ladies!—kneel, while he presents it to the duke, with a handsome speech, prophesying that he shall expel the English from France with such losses that they will never dare to come back again. Do not blame *me* if you find the Miracle Play at the Palais insupportably dull. I have no share in it. But at the Louvre I appear again, and all is brilliant. My young virgins, a thousand in number, all in white, and linked by chains of flowers, will come out to welcome the queen home to her royal abode. They will sing in chorus the sweetest verses that ever were composed. No, not quite. I must not say that before Mademoiselle Huéline de Troye."

"The fool!" muttered Simon Caboche, while all eyes were turned on the minstreless, directed by the superfluous homage of Roman de la Rose. But at this instant a flourish of trumpets from the summit of the Gate of St. Antoine saluted the first appearance of the Duke of Burgundy's array. All became restless anxiety and expectation.

"Courage, Huéline! John cannot, and shall not, refuse us the justice we ask," said Caboche to the mournful figure beside him. "The murderer of your father and of my son—he cannot refuse us his head. And he is in yonder keep! Aha, Sir Provost, we shall find some other way than storming the Bastille, as you bade us, to win him!"

Huéline made no reply, though she evidently strove to utter some words, that died away in murmurs.

The tramp of a numerous cavalry was now distinctly audible in the plain beyond the Gate of St. Antoine. But it was not the etiquette to open it until the duke applied for admittance in person. It seemed, however, that the prince had arrived, somewhat unusually, at the head of his squadrons, for a loud rapping of lances at the portal solicited attention, and a herald formally required the Parisians to receive the queen-regent and the Duke of Burgundy within the walls of Paris. The gates were quickly opened by the Veau de Bar, who rode forward with all his soldiery, and occupied the archway. He retained the keys, which were placed on a crimson cushion, and alighted, as if to present them to the duke, an honour usually reserved for the kings of France.

But the duke was not there. To the general surprise, the six hundred burghers of Paris, clad in purple mantles with white hoods, who had ridden out to meet him, presented themselves, headed by the Lord of L'Isle Adam, and a squadron of knights. According to etiquette, they ought to h-

arrived the last, as hosts escorting an honoured guest into the house. They had so very dejected and astonished a look that the provost's question as to what had happened was generally repeated in the visages of the spectators.

"My lord the duke likes not these white hoods. They remind him too much of his own rebels of Flanders; but, I trust, were not assumed out of any insolence!" replied L'Isle Adam, very sternly. "Nevertheless, Provost, he thinks you are remiss to suffer it; and, being displeased at such signs, commands that his vanguard shall be admitted ere he will venture among so rude and turbulent a people, that even on a day of rejoicing they cannot but wear the ensign of rebellion in his sight!"

"It was by no contrivance or sufferance of mine, messire," replied the Veau de Bar, with a smile that wrenched his whole visage in the effort to suppress it. "I have as many masters as there are costermongers in Paris. But I cannot think that any ill was meant by those who set the tailors at work on white hoods; wherefore, not only the duke's vanguard, but his whole army, may enter Paris at pleasure!"

This permission, eagerly echoed by the provost of the merchants, the doctors, and the chiefs of all the guilds, excepting that of the butchers, was as eagerly accepted. The butchers themselves were silent; and L'Isle Adam and his knights continued their advance, clearing the way with a rough violence and rapidity that amazed and disordered the mob. They perceived, too, with surprise, that these friendly squadrons took up such positions among the populace, and along the whole route to the Louvre, that they could not have taken more precaution had the city still been Armagnac.

An endless line of foot-soldiers followed, chiefly archers, who marched only two abreast, under pretence of moving with greater facility, but possibly with an intention of impressing the Parisians with a formidable idea of their number. Fond as they were of military display, the populace were wearied at the long array with which their beloved duke thought it necessary to precede his entry. But at last the archers passed, with all their flags and endless crossbows; pikemen followed; fresh masses of knights and men-at-arms; a body of Swiss spearmen and German lanzkenets, whose exact discipline greatly surprised and daunted the gazers, until finally the expected duke and queen came in sight.

A canopy of purple satin, richly sown with fleur-de-lys, was held as a covering over both, large as the ceiling of a [illegible]-sized chamber. The queen was borne in a litter of gold

damask, while her potent ally rode beside it on a war-horse of extraordinary size and fiery spirit. Its trappings were covered with foam, and its head was always either tossed high in the air or between its fore feet. Yet the duke governed it with perfect ease, for he was held to be one of the best knights of all France. But the trappings were so singular, that they commanded much of the public attention. They were adorned with heraldic paintings representing the labours of Hercules, not the least of which was his strangulation of the hydra, the said hydra being fairly marked with the word—Paris!

The duke himself was of lofty and massive person; so broadly and powerfully set, indeed, that the effect of his stature, when in peaceful raiment, was greatly diminished. But in armour, in which he was now cased from head to foot, he had a very warlike and majestic appearance. His countenance was handsome, though with a mixture of truculence and sensuality in its expression not altogether pleasing to the observer. It was very rough in complexion with exposure in the chase, and darkened in Eastern warfare, else it was naturally fair and florid, as in most of his race, and as was testified by his red-tinted hair and beard. He carried his own standard of St. Andrew on the point of his lance, as if insinuating the manner of his entry into Paris, and was armed so completely, that he did indeed rather seem a victorious general entering a subdued city, than a friend and welcome ally.

The queen reclined on her litter, gorgeous as a Hindoo goddess in her robes. Of tall and stately person, her exceeding pride and lofty demeanour seemed to elevate it to the gigantic. Or it might be the effect of the towering head-gear she wore, of cloth of gold, richly bejewelled, half a yard high, broadening as it mounted, and terminating in a diadem of blazing points. The rest of her garb was of gold damask tissue, with crimson-velvet fleur-de-lys, and a royal mantle of purple, lined with ermine. Her neck was bare, and her bosom open almost to the girdle, according to the liberal fashion she had herself introduced into France. Its German whiteness was one of the articles of her unpopularity with the Parisian women, who related and believed the most extraordinary legends of her amorous propensities. Her features were large, but well cut, like those of an Egyptian sphinx. She held a sceptre in her hand, and the fierce disdain and haughtiness with which she entered Paris, rendered unnecessary the inscription on the frame of the canopy, announcing to all

could read that she was Madame Isabeau, Queen and Regent of France.

There was another personage in the litter, whose timid and retiring attitude would have screened her from observation but for the magnificence of her attire. It was the Princess Catherine, in a robe of ermine, trimmed with large pearls, with a little diadem of the same virgin shell surmounting the long waves of her silken locks; a richer ornament than all her mother's gems.

Trumpeters, heralds, knights, and a numerous retinue of ladies on horseback surrounded the royal litter, behind which stretched an interminable line of spears and banners. The Parisians began to remember, with vague misgivings, their old offences against this haughty princess. And there was certainly much more of bitter reminiscence, than of present cordiality, in the few stiff bends of her massive tiara, with which Isabeau acknowledged their shouts of welcome. The demeanour of the duke was also stern and chilling, and, almost involuntarily, the joyful uproar died away in murmurs of discontent and disquiet. At this period it might have been observed that the duke glanced reproachfully and impatiently at his favourite and now inseparable councillor, Sir Pierre de Giac, who rode closely beside him, in a peaceful garb of orange-tawny velvet.

"Sir, hold on thus, or you come to Paris only to obey its ragamuffin chiefs!" whispered the minister, stooping as if to arrange the tassels of the duke's mantle.

John the Fearless towered austerely in his saddle, and continued his progress. By this time all who had any share in the ceremonial of welcome were in bustling movement. The mermaids fluttered in their ship; the Veau de Bar snatched the keys of St. Antoine, and pushed on to present them; Roman murmured to himself in ecstasy the verses his fishy women were to utter; Perrinet purfled himself in his scholar's mantle; Caboche jogged Huéline, as if he thought she was asleep; the Bishop of Paris and his clergy moved on, uncovering their glittering relics; Giles's bosom panted with expectation, and all the spectators were on tiptoe.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BETROTHAL.

The duke, and the princesses whom he escorted, had now reached the gate of St. Antoine. Trumpets brayed and

drums rolled on all sides, and the cannoneers of the Bastille succeeded very skilfully in discharging two mighty culverins that decked its walls. But it was plain that the people shouted with half breath. The cries of "Vive Bourgogne?" were short and scattered, and only a single voice shouted "Vive Madame Isabeau!" It was the polished Capeluche, unwilling that a lady should pass without some tribute of respect. The circumstance raised a peal of laughter among the variable populace that heard it, and their mirth mingled indecorously with the words of homage pronounced by the Veau de Bar, as he knelt at the duke's stirrup, to present to him the keys of his charge. The provost stammered, and became confused.

"It is enough!" interrupted Duke John. "It was because we believed your lance longer than your tongue, provost, that we put Paris into your charge—until our lady regent the queen's pleasure was known—to whom we now present these keys, your present, with our humble duty and allegiance."

"We purpose to do all by your advice, fair brother; therefore, what you have done we have done;" said Isabeau, graciously raising herself from her satin pillows, and touching the massive keys with her sceptre. "Therefore, keep these keys, Sir Guy de Bar; and keep them better than those who were wardens of St. Germain from the Armagnac traitors. And let our good people of Paris understand, that henceforth we will suffer no disorders of any sort, nor any other rule in Paris but such as we ourself, by authority of our lord the king, shall appoint."

"Marry, then, lady! you will have a good many of us to put from usurped offices!" replied the provost.

"Who are those, provost, that pretend to authority in Paris other than that we have given to you?" said the duke, in a loud offended tone, which subdued a rising murmur into silence.

"Sir, there are some half dozen in Paris whose whisper will go farther than my shout," replied the provost. "There are priests and clerks who meddle much more with my business than with their own—Master Perrinet le Clerc, for one."

"It is true, I have some sway with the poorer sort, messire, which I trust I have ever used in your grace's service," said Perrinet, boldly pushing forward, and the University followed him in a flock.

"This is the Armagnac scholar that betrayed his fellows," said De Giac, with significance. "He hath done good service indeed—he grudged not his own father's blood in your cause and he is now king of the mob of Paris."

"Nay, sir; tribune of the people of Paris," said the scholar, modestly.

"What! is this the rogue who harangued the people against us, that day our peace was proclaimed in Paris, in spite of all hindrance?" returned the duke.

"The same, my lord; the very same!" said De Giac, emphatically.

"Thou hast then done well for thyself to do us some service in the meantime!" said John the Fearless, raising his visor, and displaying a fierce and angry countenance. "But not even to deny us thy father's blood!—Go to, we will have no such servitors!—What reward canst thou expect for parricide?"

"At least—at least—the bishopric of Evreux!" gasped Perrinet le Clerc, this single thought surviving the general confusion of his ideas.

"The bishopric of Evreux!" repeated De Giac, incredulously. "Thou who canst never become a priest—who canst not even remain a clerk of the Sorbonne! Scholar, there is blood on thy vesture; it is impossible!"

"And thy father's blood!—Faugh, thou smellest of Cain, the fratricide thou didst style me!" exclaimed the duke. "Begone from our sight! Hide thee in some melancholy cloister, and repent at thy leisure, for we command thee to quit Paris, and never again to be seen within its walls, under penalty of suffering the full chastisement which thy life of blasphemy, irreligion, and treason, has too long deserved!"

Perrinet le Clerc sat absolutely petrified on his mule: his rigidity even communicated itself to the animal, and he held its head so upright and fixed in the air, that the duke could not refrain from a loud hoarse laugh. It may be imagined whether the oration the scholar had prepared slipped from his memory or not; especially when Simon Caboche joined in the mirth of the jovial duke.

"He is well gone; I never liked his fellowship," said Simon gleefully, and stepping cheerfully forward. "But I trust your grace will remember me to another purpose, for we are ancient friends."

"Know you this man, my lord?" said De Giac, with an impressive glance at the duke, and himself pretending not to recognise the Master-Chief.

"He!—who art thou, Simon?" said Duke John, rather thrown off his guard. "Nay, we remember him not. What is thy name, companion?"

"It little boots to know, since it will end with me!" returned Caboche, much surprised.

"Sir, this is the Master-Chief of the Boucherie, and commander of the *milice royale!*" said De Giac, with occult significance, after a pause.

"Ay, truly!—we had forgotten," said the duke, hastily. "Master Simon, we are bounden to you; but since we are here in person, and take on us the government of this good city of Paris, we have no farther occasion for your service, nor for those of the *milice royale*, whom we command, with all convenient speed, to return the arms they borrowed to the fortresses of the Bastille and Louvre."

"The constable, that is rotten, said no more to us!—what means this?" said Caboche, scarcely able to believe in his own senses.

"He said—but I will do!" returned John the Fearless. "Look that you bring me your arms to the Bastille before to-morrow's sunrise, or we will come ourselves and seek them in the Boucherie, Master-Chief."

"It shall not be your grace's first visit there, though it might chance to be your last!" said Simon, with dogged firmness. "I have lost so much in your service, Duke John, that I can lose but little more. Yet shall you have the arms on condition that you grant me a reward for my toils and losses (I have lost four sons, all my sons!) which it shall not much trouble you to yield, and which is all that I demand."

"Ask what thou wilt other than the continuance of thy ruffians' mastery in Paris, and 'tis thine, Simon," said the duke, somewhat remorsefully. "We know that we owe thee much, too much! Is this plump little wench thy daughter, and wouldst thou have us dowry her with her brother's inheritance in the Boucherie?"

"Heaven forbid that a woman should inherit in the Boucherie, that our old customs should be broken!" ejaculated Simon Caboche. Neither hath she any loving fool to need a dowry to wed her withal."

"So plump and smooth a partridge, and never a mate?" returned Duke John. "I will not believe it! Speak, pretty one! hast thou nothing to ask us in behalf of any good-looking lad of thine own years, for we make no mismatches without reasons of policy in the matter?"

"I would humbly implore, beseech of your highness's grace—the life of a poor Armagnac prisoner, whom I would set free, in our Lady of Mercy's name!" faltered Gules Caboche.

"Peace, fool!—mercy on an Armagnac!" exclaimed Simon. "Let my prayer be heard first, at all events, since thou art such a milky, sucking-calf! Nay, speak, Huéline! it is thy

part to speak! He slew thy betrothed—he baked thy father alive in the dungeons of the Châtelet! Demand justice on the murderer's head!"

"I do, I do!—but say not I slew my father!" murmured Huéline, and then she shrieked aloud, "Justice, vengeance! —on the Chevalier Sauvage!"

"Draw back her hood—the damsel's voice is very faint," said the duke, as Huéline knelt at his stirrup; and Gules removed her wimple. Huéline's countenance was marvellously pale, but the duke, well skilled in female beauty, was struck with it.

"It is the minstreless of the Boucherie; the damsel that was betrothed to Renaud Caboche; the daughter of Jean de Troye," said De Giac, coldly, but gazing intently at the supplicant. "She hath some reason, methinks, your grace will deem, to ask vengeance."

"The minstreless of the Boucherie! the poor scholar of the parvis!—By St. Andrew, we desired to do no one in Paris recompense but her, nor do we owe so much to any one!" said the duke, eagerly. "Ask what thou wilt, damsel de Troye; we know not that thing in our gift we can refuse."

"Then, sir duke, give us the head of a false Armagnac confined in yonder fortress—of the Chevalier Sauvage!" said Caboche, triumphantly.

"A bitter enemy to your grace—the knight who defended the Châtelet so long," said De Giac. "You may well grant this prayer, my lord, for he surrendered without condition, and deserves to die, for many treasons."

"The Chevalier Sauvage!" said Isabeau de Bavière, for the first time interfering in the dialogue. "Daughter, was that the fair knight whom you commended to our kindness?"

"For his loyalty—and devotion!" said the princess, faintly.

"Heaven thank your highness for those gentle words! but I am here to abide the punishment of whatever treasons and murthers can be justly urged against me," said the indignant tones of Owen Tudor; and a knight, in complete armour, rode forward, raised his helmet, and, bending deeply to the queen and princess, turned and wrathfully confronted the whole mass of the Cabochiens.

"It is my prisoner, whom I now resign to the good clemency of my lord the duke!" said the Veau de Bar.

"Give him to mine, Duke John, and we are quits!" persevered Simon Caboche.

"Troth! if he murdered thy son, and broiled Jean de Troye in the Châtelet, we see not wherefore we should refuse!"

said the duke, but a little irresolutely, for he was probably not unacquainted with the circumstances.

"I slew them not; all the saints forbid! I would have hazarded my own life to save either!" exclaimed Owen vehemently. "I defended my life against Renaud Caboche, but he was slain by Perrinet le Feron! And they murdered Jean de Troye, who lighted the faggots and pitch in the dungeons to destroy me—not I, not I!"

"It is madness to think otherwise!" said Isabeau, after a favourable survey of the young warrior's personal attributes. "And, by my fay, the knight's good courage in guarding our daughter, when St. Pol was stormed, merits some thanks. Fair cousin, we will that you should yield him to us as our prisoner, and he shall have a light ransom."

"Justice! vengeance!" again shrieked Huéline, piercingly.

"Why, damsel! wouldst thou undo thine own work?" said the puzzled Veau de Bar. "My lord, it was solely by the advice and counsel of this damsel that I was enabled to save the prisoners of the Châtelet."

"Justice . . . . for my father!" sighed Huéline, shuddering back from the astonished gaze of Simon Caboche.

"Methinks I can reach the justice of this case by a rare expedient of mine own," said the Duke of Burgundy, with sudden animation. "It cannot justly be said that this knight hath deprived thee of either, yet shall he prove to thee a husband—and a father, too, no doubt. He is a handsome lad; but I deem thou art a goodly woman to look at, when thou hast a little blood in thy cheeks. He is a knight, but doubtless of some lineage not so far above thine but that a good dowry can level the difference. I will give it. What sayst thou, Sir Owen! wilt thou wed the damsel and become my knight? And will not a whole man please thee better, maiden, than his head?"

And now the duke had no longer any reason for his comment on Huéline's colourlessness. Her cheeks suffused with as rich a tint as light in a goblet of red wine, and her eyes were raised with mad eagerness towards Owen—her hands clasped unconsciously in the passion of her supplication.

"Wed her! the false traitress! the murderess! the massacress!" exclaimed Owen, all whose adverse sentiments were unconsciously kindled by the address of John the Fearless. "Sir duke! in mine own land, my lineage is lofty and stainless as the descendant of throneless kings may boast! I will not wed your pitiless plotter!—rather I yield me to the knives of her Cabochiens. Neither will I ever betray the cause I serve—I cannot, and I will not be your knight."

"Then remain our prisoner, and by this token!" said the queen, throwing one of her massive gold chains over the young knight's neck. "Sir and brother, do you give him to us?"

"Take him, and teach him courtesy, madame and sister!" replied the duke. "But cheer thee up, minstreless! thou seest we are rejected too. Tut, we despair not to get thee a better husband and ourselves as good a knight. Hearken all: we do endow this damsel with our fief of the Isle Bouchard, for it something jingles with the name of the Boucherie, and is worth her acceptance—a prince's ransom only could purchase it, damsel. And now raise thine eyes and look around among the young bachelors and nobles of my court, and choose for thyself; I'll warrant, there's never a fellow to this churlish knight, that thou shouldst fear a second refusal."

Huéline indeed raised her eyes, in which the dry fire of her half-extinguished malady seemed to glow with strange fervour. An instant they rested on the Chevalier Sauvage, whose face was averted towards Madame Catherine, listening to some low sweet words, such as she dared to utter in her haughty mother's hearing. And then they fell by the merest hazard on De Giac, who was bending towards her with a strong expression of compassion and interest.

"Nay, sir, it would little become me—to woo unwooed!" she said, with remarkable firmness and distinctness. "But—on the night when your Burgundians entered Paris, when I had no dowry to tempt, when destruction was possibly at hand, when I least of all deserved it—Messire de Giac offered me his hand in marriage. If I take it now, will he withdraw it?"

"De Giac!" echoed the duke, in utter astonishment, gazing at the lean and now vehemently excited politician, who dismounted and offered his hand, kneeling in his fine orange-tawny velvet on the muddy way.

"Yes, De Giac!" repeated Huéline, mechanically giving hers.

"Wilt thou bless the marriage, Caboche, since no better can be done?" said the duke, merrily. "Come, thou wert ever of a jovial turn—and thou seest there was a little plot in the great one. De Giac, never did I deem thee such a politician as now. With what sorcery hast thou bewitched her?"

"Let me bless her, then," said the thunder-struck Master-Chief. "Renaud had a good escape from thee, Huéline, though into his bloody grave. Be not afraid. Perrinet's mother did not curse thee, nor will I. Do thou to thy new friends only what thou hast done to thine old ones, and I forgive thee. Come, Gules, let us go home."

"First let me have my boon—one poor prisoner's life—the life of Rhys ap Goronwy!" sobbed poor Gules, reduced at last to desperation.

"There is no need, sweetheart; I am here," said the squire, in the first French he had ever spoken, and blushingly advancing from a crowd of men-at-arms.

"Come, Caboche, cheer up, man; this is another case of true love; let it be rewarded," said the duke, secretly touched, it might be, with his old comrade's heaped-up measure of affliction. "This tight lad shall take a French name; we will call him Caboche in a royal patent, and he shall live to be Master-Chief; and I will hold your first grandson at baptism, and we will call him Renaud."

"Marry, since rewards are falling in such thick showers, I will hold up my head with the rest!" said the executioner, Capeluche, as Simon Caboche turned silently away. He had long been impatient, and now advanced with an air of graceful familiarity. "Your grace hath not forgotten me, at least; nor, I trust, hath Messire de Giac?"

"No, friend!—this is the rogue, assassin, robber, accomplice, and murtherer, of whom I told your highness it would be necessary to make an example!" replied De Giac, with perfect calmness.

"Frontless vassal!—truly thou hast deprived me, with thy murderous hands, of all the means by which I purposed to obtain possession of the Armagnac castles and towns!" said the duke, with a sudden ferocity. "Neither didst thou content thyself with murdering our enemies—but many innocent persons—women and children—have fallen victims to thy savage thirst for blood! Faugh, he smells of death more rankly than a ploughed churchyard! Is there any here can take a head off?—If so, bear him to the Place de Grève, and let the wild beasts there behold what justice we intend henceforth to administer in Paris!"

"I can, my lord!" said Loupgarou, eagerly stepping forward.

"Thou canst not!—my child, thou knowest thou hast never beheaded any one!" said Capeluche, scarcely able to believe that he was awake.

"I will begin with thine!" returned the apprentice.

"Do so, and be executioner of Paris in his place," said the duke.

"Capeluche! join thy hands to mine!—and we will yet see who is master of Paris! Caboche, wilt thou aid?" shouted Perrinet le Clerc, now utterly reckless and desperate.

"Scholar! wilt thou knit hands with him who slew thy mother?" yelled Loupgarou. "Sir scholar, he killed h-

[illegible] in the Cour des Miracles! [illegible] in his cellar!"

[illegible] belonged to an Arma[illegible] [illegible] De Giac, with great tran[illegible] [illegible], Master Perrinet [illegible]

[illegible] to move on [illegible] will be forgetting their verses at [illegible] grumbled Raman de la Rose, who [illegible] of his exhibition.

[illegible] till we have seen [illegible] returned the duke, [illegible] meanwhile to St. Pol, [illegible] for us to present our [illegible] lady; and De Giac, [illegible] till we can make [illegible] Squire and damsel, follow your [illegible] Go to your cloisters, [illegible] and strike your first blow, [illegible] horseleech's neck."

"[illegible] happen, master?" [illegible] Capeluche up the scaffold of [illegible] mass of gazers, dis[illegible] in the other parts of the [illegible]

"[illegible] things cannot help themselves; [illegible] said the philosophic Capeluche. "[illegible] not know how to sever a head [illegible] will make a botch of mine—and [illegible] I never taught thee! Alas, what prac[illegible] in the time of the massacre!—and [illegible] throats.—I am not in the least sur[illegible] I never trusted any human being but thee—and thou [illegible] me. That is as it should be. Besides, thou [illegible] I am ambitious too. Had I not been execu[illegible] of Paris, I should have been, perhaps, a famous soldier! I owe thee no grudge, Loupgarou, and, to prove it, I will devote my last minutes to that instruction I have too long neglected. I will teach thee how to behead a man to admiration!"

"I am strong; I will strike—that is enough!" returned the varlet.

"Strength is nothing—it is skill that is required," replied Capeluche; and for the first time his tones became mournful as he added, "I must part with these flowing ringlets, which

the women admire so much! Nothing dulls the stroke of the axe so much as hair."

"But art thou not afraid, Capeluche—art thou really not afraid—thou that hast committed so many murders that thou canst not truly answer how many when they question thee in the other world?" said Loupgarou, after roughly completing this operation.

"That is all in my favour; I will say I have a short memory," replied Capeluche. "My child, I have seen too much of death to fear it!—I think my ringlets are pretty cleanly gone; straighten down my doublet—be always careful to do that. Thou wilt not always have so long a neck as mine to sunder! I must now kneel—and by etiquette I should have a confessor—but, as there is none at hand, it matters not! I will now speak for thee as a friend and master should. Parisians! do not judge your new executioner by this first attempt. He has good will—but good will is not all in our profession. Above all, do not judge him by comparison; I was born an executioner, he became one by chance; for, if I had not taken a fancy to him and saved him from the wheel, he would not have been here this day to assist in my last moments!—My dear child, art thou ready?"

"Yea," said Loupgarou, holding up his axe with both hands, and quivering with eagerness. "It is all envy!—Let the Parisians judge me by this first effort!"

"I am content," said Capeluche. "Either way, I shall be a gainer. I have only one thing more to say, and then I will lay my neck nicely on the block—but I must whisper it." And putting his lips to Loupgarou's ear, he continued: "After all, I think thou wilt some day remember me with tenderness—I have been a father to thee, for I loved thee—and, if thou wouldst offer the only consolation possible to my memory, take some good season to inform the wife of Messire De Giac—the *wife*, look ye—that it was he who ordered the removal of her father to the dungeons of the Châtelet: wilt thou, child?"

"I will," replied Loupgarou.

"I leave thee my blessing, then; and now let me try the block," said Capeluche, stretching his head over the billet—"bend my neck first to learn where the stroke should"——But at this point his over-eager apprentice suddenly let the blow fall without attending to the anatomy so as to select a joint.

"Ah, villain! did I not say so?" screamed Capeluche, in agony.

"And said I not that it is all strength, after all?" said Loupgarou, completing his office with a stroke that severed not only his master's neck, but the block too.

[illegible]

[illegible]

the insignia of various orders of knighthood; hang at his girdle the key which he carried as grand-master of the duke's household; put a hat about half the height of a modern one, turned up in front with a cluster of diamonds for a button, on the bridegroom's head; an enormous nosegay of sumptuous flowers in his hand—and you have Messire De Giac, on the only happy day of his life.

The chapel was richly adorned which was appropriated to the ceremony in Notre Dame. The priests themselves took an interest in the Minstreless of the Boucherie. Wreaths of flowers garlanded the black old Gothic arches of the chapel; the floor was strewed with rosemary, save where the duke and his royal guests were to stand, which was covered with wrought velvet. The sun took pleasure in decking the pomp, and flamed in at the great rose-window with a splendour that diffused itself more solemnly throughout the church. The altar was decked in golden plate and ornaments, and hung with white velvet; in the centre shone a lamb darting long rays of light—the Lamb of peace and consolation to mankind.

When the bridegroom and his attendants arrived in this chapel, the sacristy behind the altar was open, and revealed other preparations in progress. The Bishop of Paris, surrounded by a court of his clergy, in their festival robes, sat laughing and chatting amidst a bustle of golden censers, white-garbed clerks, and a concourse of cross-bearers, vergers, pages, and other ecclesiastical retinue.

According to French nuptial etiquette, which required the bridegroom to seem the more impatient of the two (and, in this case, he undoubtedly was), De Giac was the first to arrive in the chapel. The livery which the bridegroom had given to his knights was all of white satin and silver, with skyblue ribands and mantles. Owen was distinguished among the train by the beauty of his person, and by a chain of the finest gold round his wrist and neck, with which sign it pleased Isabeau to mark him as her prisoner.

In this array, the bridegroom and his men awaited the arrival of the bride and her attendants. The necessary interval elapsed, and then they came! To do the bride the more honour, the duke himself deigned to act as her father, and escorted her from the Bastille. Midway from the Louvre the queen and her ladies joined them on horseback; and, by way of crowning favour, it was announced that the Princess Catherine, and certain youthful damsels of the court, would officiate as bridesmaids.

With this most honourable escort, the betrothed bride entered the chapel of Notre Dame. There might have been

something in the princess's manner, or even in her smile, that convinced Owen it was necessary for him to look cheerful indeed, if he would dissipate all suspicion on the part of the damsel of France. Else, until this moment, it must be allowed that he did not look particularly happy.

Luckily, the queen and her daughter entered first, for Owen was completely taken by surprise when Huéline followed, leaning on the arm of the Duke of Burgundy. Never had she seemed so beautiful even in his eyes, as now, when he beheld her about to become the possession of his most hated and despised rival! He had need, indeed, to conjure up the horrible associations of the massacre, the unnumbered bleeding phantoms of his murdered friends, to prevent a sentiment of bitter envy and regret mingling in the scorn and revengeful triumph that glowed in his soul at the exultation of De Giac's manner. In truth, the beauty of the bride was so enhanced by the splendour of her dress, that she seemed like a diamond, long ill-set, which, in the gold of some skilful jeweller, emits a thousand unsuspected beams and colours. Or it might be, that the energy of will exercised a kind of magic—and Huéline was determined, on that day, to be the most beautiful woman present. Owen himself could not but feel that the rosy-tinted loveliness of Catherine of France faded into a kind of colourlessness contrasted with the lustrous hues of Huéline's fiery blood, her coronal of white roses and pearls, and her veil, light and bright as silvery air, relieving instead of darkening her rich complexion, which passion kindled as with flame. Even the somewhat haggard and desperate brilliancy in her eyes heightened their dazzle and extraordinary effect. The Duke of Burgundy uttered the general sentiment when he exclaimed, "Here is thy bride, thou sly Pierre! take her at our hand, for the richest recompense we have yet bestowed on thee; yet, by our faith, we would rather keep than give it!"

This observation was applauded as a royal compliment by the courtiers; but certain persons, who had good reason to be aware of some characteristics of John the Fearless, exchanged smiles.

"Nay, sir, we do not dread your revocation even of so matchless a grace!" replied De Giac, with a smile on his lips, and a frown on his brows. "Our bride is one whom we would wager freely against the Roman Lucretia; and (the Chevalier Sauvage will be our witness) not causelessly."

The Chevalier Sauvage blushed deeply; but he felt that the eyes of the princess were upon him, and that it was necessary to look cheerful. He therefore laughed, as if carelessly

acknowledging the innuendo; yet was there something discordant and forced in his mirth that excited the attention of the least observant.

"The Chevalier Sauvage?—Messire, you remind me well," said the bride, with singular rapidity. "I wish to show all men that I acquit him of those charges which the hate of Simon Caboche—but he was a father!—I have promised my confessor, who will not else permit me to partake of this sacrament—not else give me absolution for such light offences as——Chevalier Sauvage, lend me your hand! The good capuchin awaits us in the sacristy—in whose presence I must solemnly promise you forgiveness, ere—will you not come? It shall be alone, no witnesses!—promise me this, lords,—for some hold me injured of this knight!"

"Go with her, knight; these are women's fancies, but to them they are realities," said the duke, bestowing a rough clap of the shoulder on Owen Tudor, as if to awaken him. And before he was thoroughly aware of his position he found himself walking side by side with Huéline, his arm linked in hers, towards the sacristy of Notre Dame, leaving the whole bridal group in attendance. The shudders that ran through Huéline's veins traversed his own as if by electric contact, and, when suddenly she stepped aside into one of the numerous chapels, he felt no power of resistance or of pause, but yielded to her impulse, and entered also.

"Owen!" she then exclaimed, breathlessly—"dearest Owen!" and her voice was for the moment lost, and a shower of tears covered her bridal veil with sparkles. "My first, my only love!—believe me now, when on this—my day of doom—I imprecate death on my head, as I mount the steps of the altar to wed another—if ever I have been false to thee in heart or in deed—save so far as to permit the wooing of yonder wretch of the Sorbonne! Lightnings parch me now, and here, if I chose De Giac in aught but the very madness of despair! No priest, no monk, awaits to absolve me!—who would, who could?—But I believe thee innocent of those dark charges!—And we might yet be so blest, so happy! Never man was loved as thou art, and by a soul like mine, whose love is boundless as air, that pervades all things! Why, then, wilt thou abandon me to this cruel destiny? Catherine of France never can be thine, she never shall be thine; it is assured, and most firmly resolved, that she shall wed Henry of England! And what is there in the chance smile of a coquettish girl that thou shouldst prefer it to the fathomless tenderness of a heart like mine? She is royal by birth, but I, Owen! I am royal by nature!—It is not yet to

[illegible] return to the chapel. Dost thou acknowledge [illegible] : that thou [illegible] — [illegible] in the face of the [illegible] around me, and [illegible] the universe!— [illegible] necessary to thy triumph — [illegible] I have been thy paramour [illegible] than be the wife of [illegible]

[illegible] the strength of the [illegible] Owen's ambition, and [illegible] the injuries he had [illegible] honour, and his pride, to [illegible].

"[illegible] and so have I," he returned. "[illegible] the last cup of remorse [illegible]—a river of blood, [illegible] between us! I am *not* innocent of the death of [illegible]: the remorse in my heart [illegible]. Thou art their murderess, but I am their destroyer, [illegible] woman!—And what speakest thou of [illegible] betrothed to De [illegible] of Perrinet le Clerc? [illegible] since it knows no [illegible] of Henry of England—the stars are mightier than the malice of women! For what thou sayest against Catherine of France, I answer, that I believe and trust in her faith more than ever I did in thine when thou [illegible] me most! The honour and faith of a princess of France is a stake of mightier worth than the [illegible] of a woman of thy base birth and baser treachery."

[illegible] cowered beneath these words as if they exercised some violent pressure upon her; but she rose, when they ceased, with a suddenness that made Owen start.

"Hath she pledged thee her faith?—Well, thou shalt live to see by how much it surpasses that of the false daughter of Jean de Troye!" she exclaimed. "Thou shalt live to see whether the stars are mightier than the human heart!—Or dost thou hope to win the daughter, as a mark of the mother's tenderness for thee; which doubtless escapes not thy penetrating eye?"

"It is false!" said Owen, turning very pale, yet alarmed and incensed almost equally. "Thou judgest and speakest as women of thy kind ever judge and speak of the chaste and honourable of their sex, hoping to bring them to as base a level! Queen Isabeau is courteous and affable to her captive

—and thou—what *wert* thou? Thou shalt live yet, false one, to own and blush at the contrast!"

"It shall be seen," returned Huéline, with a lurid smile—"it shall be seen, I doubt not, what spell there is in the grandeur of birth and fortune to justify these monkish praises—this contrast! And remember, when the time comes thou art not the *first* love of Isabeau de Bavière!—that she is not young, empassioned, despairing—a minstreless!—Woeful race!—what do we on the earth with hearts like these? But they harden, too, in their turn: dost thou know, knight, that there is something about mine now, colder than the waters of a petrifying spring? All will be well anon! Meanwhile my fate still keeps a strange parallel with thine! Queen Isabeau loves thee!—dost thou think Duke John hates me?

"Why should he hate thee—that hast served him so direfully?" said Owen, startled with this intimation, vague as it was.

"Have I not served thee?—Acknowledge! I saved thy life at some cost!" replied Huéline, with fierce vivacity. "I loved thee only too well, and therefore thou hatest me!—wherefore should not Duke John?—Foolish children of the moment we minstrels are, good knight! still we must have new toys to amuse us when the old ones are broken and gone. Never more can the heart of Huéline love; it is exhausted there, mighty as was the stream when it first burst to light! But ambition, and power, and vengeance!—these are diversions that may fill something of that fathomless void that is before us both; for thou, even thou, wilt live to regret this moment—to feel that I, too, who believe not in thy star, can prophesy!"

"Let us return; your bridegroom will become impatient!" said Owen.

"It is well; it is very well; it needed but this—let us part indeed!" returned Huéline. "Let us part like two flames that have mingled for an instant, each on its own path of destruction! What I am, I have perchance made myself; all that I shall be, thou hast made me! Remember that! We part: I, to learn what deeper depths there are in shame, what deepest treacheries in the heart of man!—thou to learn what talismans there are in royalty to keep passion pure and true! Farewell, since it must be! Farewell, Chevalier Sauvage, not ill-named!—the minstreless of the Boucherie bids adieu to Owen Tudor—and to herself, for ever—thus!"

And, throwing her arms around his neck, she pressed her lips to his with a suffocating sigh—lingered an instant—and then started away, echoing faintly, "It is true; let us return; the bridegroom will be impatient!"

late [illegible] chapel, where the bridal guests were
ledge [illegible] little weary, and considerably sur-
lovest [illegible] something even of suspicion in the gloomy
fiend [illegible] the frank gaiety of his bride. the
call t [illegible] which she announced that henceforth the
Nay, [illegible] herself were good friends and allies, dissi-
—I [illegible] Moreover, never did bride go with more
mo[illegible] [illegible]ness of response through the solemn for-
De [illegible] matrimonial rite. She pronounced the fatal
[illegible] faltering distinctness; and De Giac had every
pr[illegible] content, unless, perhaps, he was a little troubled
hi[illegible] and durance of the embrace wherewith the
st[illegible] Burgundy raised and saluted the Lady de Giac a
[illegible] that title.

[illegible] Yeux, the duke's fool, observed thus: "The bride is
[illegible] twenty-five summers old, as I conceive," he said with a
[illegible] his brother jester of the court of France. "The
[illegible] groom counts some fifty winters. Companion, doth not
[illegible] oft come between summer and winter, and is not my
[illegible] a jolly knight of forty?"

"And they say the bride is as learned as a clerk; so, no
[illegible], she can reckon differences," returned he of France.

The Duke of Burgundy gave the bridal feast in his hotel
[illegible] Artois, and it was long celebrated as one of the most splen-
[illegible] that had ever been given in Paris. History relates that
there were no fewer than seventeen courses served, each more
delicious and gorgeous than its predecessor. The hall of
the palace was fitted up to resemble a glade in an eastern
forest, its gilded palm-trees being matted together with the
finest flowers. The courses of wild meats, such as boar and
venison, were served by savages, naked to the waist. Twelve
peacocks graced the board—so great was the multitude of
noble guests, all of whom would have been offended if placed
at too great a distance from that kingly bird. These were
not eaten, but the spices and oil that stuffed them were kept
alight at the bills, and diffused an aromatic smoke over all the
guests. Minstrels kept the air in harmonious movement, and
as often as the heralds, and pages, and other servitors of the
feast cried "Largesse, largesse!" the duke's treasurers show-
ered silver among them until the sacks they carried were
emptied.

The jests that kept the table in a roar must be omitted,
especially the good merriment of John the Fearless, who
deserved his cognomen even in his wit. The grand epitha-
lamic masque devised by Master Roman de la Rose was also
[illegible]ly suited to the occasion to be reproduced on any

other. It is enough to say that it excited the utmost satisfaction among the bridal guests, and that it consisted in a dispute between the goddess Venus (represented, according to Pagan tradition, unencumbered with any profusion of drapery) and divers allegorical personages with whom the bride was supposed to be on the point of parting company. The goddess gained the argument, but not until the well-seasoned brows of De Giac himself were coloured with a scarlet suffusion. Roman de la Rose achieved nevertheless, or perhaps in consequence, the highest possible mark of the duke's approval, in the shape of a public gift of the magnificent mantle worn at the moment by the royal patron.

A merry interlude heightened the enjoyment of the banquet. The duke's jester appeared in a sacerdotal habit, filched from some priestly reveller, and announced that he was so pleased with the marriage that had taken place, that he himself had just united another couple. Whereupon he produced a withered apple and a ripe peach in a salver with their stalks joined by a cobweb, which was handed round the company. Wherever it went, it produced a roar of laughter. De Giac was vexed to the soul, but he was too judicious not to join in the laugh; still he could not refrain from gratifying the jester with a violent blow on the ear when he handed the salver to him. It was overset, the peach rolled on the table, and the poor fool fled howling to a distance. De Giac ascribed his wrath to the profanation of the holy habit, and the duke admitted the apology with tears of laughter streaming from his eyes, and the juice of the peach from his lips, for he had snatched it up and devoured it with an enthusiasm not unnoted.

The august Isabeau herself and her ladies deigned to take charge of the remainder of the ceremonial, which, in an old French marriage, included some matters not ill dispensed with by modern taste. The bride was installed in state in her couch, whither all the guests were expected to proceed to witness the last benediction, and escort the bridegroom with becoming honours. Roman de la Rose certifies that never was a bride more handsomely adorned or more beautiful to behold than the Lady de Giac. He noted, however, as a somewhat marvellous matter, that, although the blaze of a hundred tapers illuminated the new wife, and although she was burgess-bred, she never once blushed through all the subsequent ceremonies.

The benediction was pronounced by the Bishop of Paris with infinite unction and charity, whilst certain assistants showered holy water over the satin pillows and counterpa-

and the bridemaidens, headed by their fair princess, covered the new-married pair with a profusion of the loveliest flowers. In conclusion, the queen and all her ladies kissed the bride, and the bride-knights claimed the same privilege, according to custom, as their fee. All obtained it but the Chevalier Sauvage, who lingered the last and paused so long, in bashful hesitation, no doubt, that John the Fearless suddenly started before him, and exclaiming, "Bear witness all, I am his proxy!" made himself so with a heartiness that produced a universal burst of merriment. But as this somewhat superfluous cordiality was accompanied by the parchments of a grant of the great fief of L'Isle-Bouchard, as a morning-gift to the bride, few of the courtiers present would not have been well content had their own spouses received it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE INFLUENCE OF PRIVATE ON PUBLIC HISTORY.

SEVERAL months elapsed after the marriage of Sir Pierre de Giac and the Demoiselle Huéline de Troye, renowned all over France as the most joyous and magnificent that had taken place in men's memories under degree of royal. But, considering the great obligations of the Duke of Burgundy to both the parties, no one marvelled at the honours he heaped on them. And now again, the progress of our history takes us to another courtly revel, in the Castle of the Louvre.

This palace fortress was inhabited by the Queen Regent, Isabeau, while the wretched king, her husband, concealed his degradation and misery, under the ward of Duke John, at St. Pol. There he was neglected and deserted by all the world, while his wife busied herself in endeavouring to restore her court to its ancient brilliancy and gaiety.

An apartment was assigned to Owen Tudor in the Great Tower of the Louvre, inhabited by the queen herself, who selected it on account of its strength, and its being the centre of the whole enormous pile. Even here, she scarcely believed herself in security against the hatred of the Parisians. So much honour was shown to Owen Tudor, though but a prisoner, and one who obstinately refused to take suit and service in a cause polluted by the chieftaincy of John of Burgundy, and blood so treacherously shed, that the old courtiers and servants of Isabeau were justly offended at the open marks of preference bestowed upon him.

Yet, with all the advantages he enjoyed and the envy he excited, Owen Tudor deemed not himself happy. All paths

to glory and distinction seemed closed to him. Isabeau had fixed his ransom, as she said, at his value; and that was so large a sum, it was impossible for him even to hope ever to regain his freedom by purchase. And the circumstance he thought would give him most satisfaction, by the severance of his secret chain—the marriage of Huéline—became soon a source of the bitterest sentiments and apprehensions.

With the sudden glories of an erratic star shooting into a new sphere, the Lady de Giac entered the court of France, as the united retinues of Queen Isabeau and the Duke of Burgundy, assembled in Paris, styled themselves. The admiration of the duke speedily enlightened his courtiers and allies to the merits of the new luminary. The despised minstreless of the Boucherie soon became celebrated as a poetess, whose genius far surpassed that of all the troubadours, minstrels, and jongleurs of the age. Alain Chartier (who took part with the dauphin and resided at his court) was held, in Paris, to be a mere ballad-monger in comparison. Besides, Alain was terribly ugly; and the most envious could not deny the beauty of the wife of De Giac.

Somewhat of this applause was no doubt due to the deference felt by most men to the opinion of so great a critic as the Duke of Burgundy. But it is true that the talents of the minstrel daughter of Jean de Troye, so little appreciated in the Boucherie, opened, like the rich flowers that need a glowing sun, into full luxuriance in the blaze of a court. The stormy and terrible events of her career seemed by no means to have diminished the lustre and gaiety of Huéline's imagination. On the contrary, all the characteristics of the beautiful, fervid, and joyous genius of the minstreless of Champagne appeared to revive with increased splendour. The warmth and amorous festivity of her chansons and lays were indeed but too much increased, and reached excesses which, however, only recommended them the more to a prince whose palled sensuality required the strongest species of stimulants to rouse his interest.

They were few who penetrated this splendid disguise, who perceived in the very exaggeration of those pleasurable qualities their unreal and hollow essence. The anguish which vents itself in laughter is the most terrible of all; the soul has indeed reached a ghastly verge of suffering when all natural forms of expression are exhausted, and it is compelled to betake itself even to opposites, in mere contempt of their inadequate utterances! Or is it that the passions—like the humanity they rend—hope to disguise themselves most effectually by assuming the characteristics most opposed

[illegible]

[illegible] Her [illegible] occu- [illegible] Her genius of [illegible] in the [illegible] in the blood [illegible] her is a congenial spirit to [illegible] There was nothing, therefore, remarkable [illegible] in discoursing with her, apart, [illegible] of policy: or that a woman eager [illegible] promoting her husband's [illegible] should [illegible] the opportunity of swaying the royal [illegible]

Perhaps it was observation of the influence enjoyed by the wife of De Giac that first recommended her to the favour of Isabeau de Bavière. The haughty German princess was else not likely to have taken much notice of a woman sprung from the class she most detested, the commonalty of Paris. But Isabeau eagerly welcomed pleasure from whatever quarter it came; and when she had made discovery of the brilliant and complying genius of the minstreless, her congenial love of enjoyment and magnificence, her unbounded talents in creating the means of both, she gradually took her almost as closely into her confidence and friendship as the Burgundians themselves. Isabeau was always glad to unite the gratification of her voluptuous pursuits with those sterner ones of ambition and intrigue that exercised an equal influence over her strangely-compounded nature. It was a satisfaction of no light order to cherish, in the wife of the powerful minister, the gayest and least trammelled by scruples of confidants and abettors!

But now, in the progress of this tide of court favour, Owen observed, with fear and poignant regret, that the minstreless began to extend her fascinations even around her innocent and unsuspecting rival, the Princess Catherine. It was not without reason that Owen dreaded and doubted the purpose of the ascendancy which the Lady De Giac applied herself to acquire over his royal love! But the most prejudiced could not long resist the charm of Huéline's genius; and the princess was already well disposed to receive the agreeable impressions the new courtier's beauty and insinuating tenderness diffused about her like an atmosphere. She knew Huéline had inviolably preserved the secret revealed in the Boucherie. But her possession of it gave her a power which Catherine was surprised to find displayed only in acts of tacit but compassionate and most zealous furtherance of the sentiments that might well be supposed to animate the hearts of the youthful lovers. Much gratitude was due to her for the preservation, at so much hazard, of the beautiful knight; and any suspicions or jealousies the revelations of the Boucherie might have entailed were effectually removed from the mind of Catherine of France by Owen's open rejection of the alleged object of his early caprice, and the as patent preference and choice Huéline had made of a husband.

The Lady De Giac's wit and vivacity took the attention of the princess in common with the rest of the court. The exertions she made to ingratiate herself with her, the profound insight of character she possessed, speedily enabled her to work her way into the good graces of an inexperienced

The only thing remarkable in the influence thus obtained was that the Lady De Giac continued a favourite with the imperious mother at the same time. The latter circumstance enabled her to procure the princess many indulgences that gave her natural character play and opportunities to expand by loosening the extreme strictness of those bonds of etiquette and education which trammelled it. As long as the Lady De Giac was of her company, Isabeau was satisfied her daughter was in safe hands, and the princess began soon to seek her surveillance as the lightest and most indulging she had ever experienced.

There was, perchance, a secret reason for this confidence that Catherine dreamed not, often as she mused wherefore her mother no longer restrained her to the society of the stiffest and sternest matrons of the court. On one great point of policy, Isabeau de Bavière and the Lady De Giac enthusiastically agreed, though against the opinions of the sage Sir Pierre himself. Both held that peace and alliance with England must be purchased, at whatever price. Of all human beings, Isabeau detested her only son, the dauphin, the most—with whom she was fearful that a wise policy and the necessities of the times might induce Duke John to coalesce. She foresaw in such a union the utter ruin of the power she had again grasped, and the triumph of an enemy who had disgraced and wronged her both as queen and mother, to an excess which, the guiltier they were, the less would either pardon.

The Lady De Giac had never made any secret of her admiration for the character and achievements of the heroic English king. She took pleasure in glorifying his exploits, though at the expense of France, in the triumphant colours of her minstrelsy. Her learning furnished her with illustrious comparisons that heightened his renown into something of mythic grandeur. She delighted to compare him to Alexander the Great, even in the excesses of his youth, so nobly redeemed! Owen Tudor listened to these pæans, it may be imagined, with but little satisfaction, more especially as, among the exploits of Henry, the overthrow and ruin of his native land figured as a mere episode. He certainly shared not the inextinguishable peals of laughter with which on one occasion the French court listened to a ludicrous catalogue of the unnumbered kings and princes of Wales who stood in battle with the dreamer, Glendower, against their English vanquisher! Huéline chanted them with the utmost solemnity; but the barbaric sound of the names, the enormous pretensions and petty means of these chieftains, failed not to

excite ridicule in the sarcastic verse of the minstreless. Owen could not but wonder from what source she had derived her information, until he remembered that in the time of the Armagnacs he had headed his proposals for a Welsh rebellion with a list of those chieftains whose former actions argued the part they would take in future opportunities. This he thought might have fallen into her hands, and it was a new demonstration of her secret power. Owen had now begun to appreciate the influence of ridicule over the French, and he perceived that the Lady De Giac had taken the surest means to render his patriotic projects abortive.

But Owen perceived, moreover, that these magnificent praises gradually dispelled the terrible and dark associations around his mighty rival. Catherine of France had hitherto regarded the contingency at which her mother laboured so earnestly as the most dreadful that could befall her. She personified herself as one of those hapless heroines of minstrelsy doomed as a sacrifice to appease the rage of some sea-monster. The fervent hatred of Owen against the English prince, his beauty and daring chivalry, easily associated his figure in the group as the destined deliverer. But the Lady De Giac destroyed this composition by introducing a thousand incongruous lights and shadows. The Welsh knight's belief in his prophecy, his wild projects of wearing a crown and sharing it with a royal bride, excited apparently only a sense of the ridiculous in her. And Catherine found it impossible to avoid laughing at the ludicrous lights in which the ingenious wit of her confidante placed these audacious dreams! More especially as, far from disapproving of the romantic attachment existing between the princess and her aspiring knight, the courtly minstreless treated it with the greatest indulgence. She pleaded Owen's cause—but in a manner not irreconcilable with the ambition and natural desire of supremacy which she found and fanned in the heart of the youthful princess. Even though she blushed to listen to the sweet and eloquent insinuations of her new friend's zeal, Catherine of France listened!—at first with dislike and hesitation—but the prospects held out were too flattering to be altogether rejected—and the Lady De Giac often repeated, with laughing meaning, to the princess, legends of the loves of the queens of great kings with glorious knights, abounding in the romantic lore of the middle ages. She sung them with the exquisite glow and colouring her imagination—or recollections—too readily lent. The faithful passion of Guenever and Launcelot; the tender story of Queen Isonde and the famous Welsh knight, Tristrem of Lyons, embellished by the patheti-

beautiful genius of Huéline (for she was Huéline still when she sung!), fascinated the attention of Catherine of France. The guilt and sorrow of those unlawful loves were lost in the lustre of their pleasures and triumphs, in the glittering adjuncts and halos of poesy!

The Lady De Giac admitted the hopelessness of an honourable attachment between a princess of France and a penniless knight from a half-savage land. She proved it with all the force of her reason and rhetoric. The princess herself was well aware of the iron fixedness of her mother's will, and that she had resolved on effecting her union with Henry of England. But a more terrible despair was offered to her, partly from her own observation, enlightened by the revelations of the Lady De Giac. She could not but decipher, young and innocent as she was, the meaning of the gaze which Isabeau de Bavière so frequently turned upon her beautiful prisoner! She did not indeed doubt his fidelity—the Lady De Giac herself never apprehended or suggested the smallest suspicion on this point. But Catherine felt a conviction of the utter hopelessness of her lover's aspirations daily gain ground in her heart.

Still the indulgent Lady De Giac neglected no opportunity, apparently, of favouring the interests of the youthful lovers. Whenever she was in attendance on the princess, and an interview was possible, she never failed to add Owen Tudor to the party, under some pretext of needing his attendance or escort. On any other but these occasions of promenade and exercise in the gardens of the palace, it was scarcely possible for Owen to exchange a word, or even a glance, with his royal mistress. And yet Catherine remarked, that these precious opportunities were neglected, or frittered away in frivolous gossip, by the knight of Wales. In vain did the courteous and vivacious Lady De Giac strive to give him security and assurance by her playful encouragements. In vain did the princess herself, vaguely flattered with the hopes infused by the minstreless, extend to him more open and definite signs of approval. Owen Tudor continued reserved, cold, and melancholy in these interviews, which took place in such a presence. All the gay raillery and kindness of the Lady De Giac only deepened his gloom and apprehensions. With what face, indeed, could he make love to his new idol, when smiles so full of mocking reminiscence dwelt on his every word?

These circumstances accumulated sufferings and apprehensions in the heart of Owen Tudor. He perceived that the princess began to take offence at the continued reserve in his demeanour, whilst the warmth in her own so visibly increased. Yet it was impossible to offer any explanation. With all his

aversion to entertain even the thought, Owen could not be altogether unaware of the licentious liking it had pleased the gracious Isabeau to take for him. Her eyes, not unjustly famed for power of expression, would not permit him to remain in complete ignorance of the flattering fact. Now—though, from the moment when they parted in the chapel of Notre Dame, those of Huéline had never once encountered his—Owen was conscious that a declaration of war had then been exchanged, not the less in activity because carried on covertly and silently. Conscious of her subtlety, and of the motives that animated her, he dared not confide in any professions of the queen's chosen confidante.

And thus he saw forming around him again trammels still more powerful and complex than those from which he had broken with such difficulty. And the Chevalier Sauvage, who had transferred the romantic idolatry of his imaginative nature to the Princess Catherine, could not behold without pain any congeniality of sentiment existing between his discarded and his royal love. This contributed to the general perturbation of his ideas. He now abhorred, more than he had once admired, those lays of love that depicted its triumph over all human obstacles, in which honour and virtue counted as nothing in the game. Ranks were levelled, as formerly, in the lays of Huéline, but no longer by the mere magic of love. The mockery of all restraints, the defiance of opinion, the colourless contrast those shadows offered with the tangible enjoyments of passion, were now the staples of her laughing lays.

Perhaps the earliest flame in his soul was not so totally extinguished as, in his fury and indignation, Owen had at first imagined. The splendours of genius and success surrounding Huéline dispelled, at least for a period, the hideous phantasmagoria associated with her image. Owen's dislike of De Giac had become a settled hatred of the husband of Huéline de Troye. Yet he watched her proceedings with Duke John so much more anxiously, so restlessly, that he himself could not conjecture wherefore. And long before any one else, even of that intriguing and vigilant court, he had gathered a bitter granary of doubts and fears in his heart. Suspicion became the constant guest of that broad and open mountain bosom, while, where it had been an habitual resident, it never entered! De Giac was lulled in a charmed security. The statesman had so much apparent reason to indulge in the happiness he enjoyed in the possession of his beautiful and richly-endowed wife, that his security might be pardo- Huéline's public choice of him, her former displays of

and superiority to temptation, the excessive love which she knew how to inspire and how to maintain, even in one who filled her only with disgust, blinded him. Moreover, De Giac, with all his knowledge of mankind, still believed in human gratitude! He confided in the generosity that mingled in all the ferocious qualities of Duke John, and he believed in the incorruptible virtue of his wife. Incorruptible, indeed, by any of the motives which he could imagine governed her course. But Owen had not a similar ignorance of the most powerful ones at work in her breast.

The duke's admiration of beauty, and the pleasure he took in any species of talent that amused his occasionally heavy thoughts, were well known to De Giac, and he took rather pride than offence in the boisterous homage paid to his wife. It added to the dread inspired by his own power. De Giac was occupied in great projects—he was charmed into continual security by the magic of his wife's beauty and fascinations, and her undiminished tenderness. He was a statesman, and one not unfitted to wield the vast power he had attained by means so dreadful. De Giac governed the duke, and, through him, France. He desired to perpetuate his power, and he perceived clearly that the dominance of the energetic and ambitious king of England would deprive both him and his master of their sway. He knew, on the contrary, that the dauphin was easily ruled by those about him, and thought that he could manage him as well as his own duke. The Armagnac faction was almost rooted out; he had little to fear on the score of competition. De Giac was not altogether destitute of patriotism. He felt that the authority of a mad king and of a licentious queen must soon fall into contempt. Already Paris, the index of France, had shown the most decided symptoms of impatience and restlessness. Simon Caboche was acknowledged to be fairly mad, and yet he had caused several violent commotions of the populace merely by his habit of wandering about the Boucherie, demanding blood and prisoners incessantly. He was now confined in his own house, a raving lunatic, under the affectionate cares of his daughter and son-in-law, who had been appointed his successor. But he was not the less a sign of the times. The subsidies raised to supply the extravagance of the court, under pretence of carrying on the war against England, produced universal discontent. Duke John himself was vexed with the loss of his popularity, and his favourite saw no readier means of retrieving it than by labouring earnestly in the great and glorious project of expelling the invaders from France; as a preliminary to which, the union of the two factions of the

dauphin and duke was essential. And thus Owen Tudor found himself, at least on one point, in exact congeniality of wish and purpose with the husband of Huéline de Troye.

De Giac's chief difficulty, he thought in his politic brain, lay in the opposition of the Queen Regent. But he knew that Duke John both hated and despised her, and the adroit minister easily persuaded him that he would be enabled to govern the dauphin. The duke was not altogether destitute of regard for his native land. His pride rendered him averse to the sway of a foreigner, and especially of a prince so arbitrary and masterful as Henry of England was known to be. His ambition had reached a height on which he had nothing any longer to hope from the alliance, and much to fear. The chivalric and national feelings of France were set in a strong tide against any further submissions to the conquerors; and half the popularity of John the Fearless lay in the belief that he was the destined avenger and restorer of the monarchy.

For awhile De Giac found no obstacle to his plans, save what arose from the impotent resistance of Isabeau de Bavière. But when they approached maturity, he became gradually aware of some secret influence at work in counteraction, much more powerful than any he imagined he had reason to dread. Some very privy councillor continually renewed in the duke a belief of the impossibility of his ever effecting a sincere reconciliation with the dauphin. The vengeance he had to dread, the torrents of blood that flowed between them, were continually placed before his eyes. It was in vain that De Giac urged the extreme necessity to which the dauphin was reduced, the softness and placability of his character. Duke John admitted the fact on all other points, but declared that he was known to cherish so much fear and animosity against the man who had dared to steep himself in the blood of his royal race —between whom and a crown only himself intervened—that a coalition was impossible. The dauphin was surrounded by the infuriate friends and relatives of the massacred Armagnacs. It was certain that they would incessantly prompt him to resume the power appertaining to the heir of the monarchy, for their own enjoyment. On the other hand, his secret councillors suggested to the duke that usurpers like the English would always need his aid and support—that they had no vengeance to demand on his head! Consequently, that their alliance was infinitely preferable.

These contending councils produced the most extraordinary displays of vacillation and hesitation on the part of Duke John. The urgency of his most trusty and sagacious ministers, of his nobility, of turbulent Paris itself, was outb-

by some secret whispering. Nothing could be plainer than the impolicy of continuing to foster a foreign enemy in a kingdom of which he had nigh attained the supreme authority. Even as Duke of Burgundy, so powerful a suzerain as Henry of England was the worst neighbour he could procure himself. John the Fearless felt that while he hesitated his popularity ebbed like water around him, and set in flow towards his enemy. In moments of conviction he would yield to the persuasions of his ministers, then as suddenly recall all he had consented to. Twice he ordered the levy-in-mass to be proclaimed, which would have hurled all France on the invaders; and so simultaneous an effort might have effected much. Yet twice he revoked his edicts, under alleged fears that the populace of the cities, enraged at the heavy taxes laid upon them, would turn the arms bestowed on them against himself. He consented repeatedly to the expediting of ambassadors to the dauphin; but flying messengers recalled them, or they were refused permission to start on their expedition. Qualms of doubt, suspicions that it was but humbling himself in vain, were the excuses alleged for these infirmities of purpose.

But the most extraordinary of all Duke John's vacillations occurred in a movement which the satiric Parisians subsequently qualified as the "Flight of Beauvais." The wise and salutary councils of De Giac seemed at one time to have prevailed. He piqued the duke into resolution, by declaring that he was thought to be under the dominion of a woman, meaning to insinuate that the queen governed him. De Giac had an idea, indeed, that some such influence was exerted against his own, though among the numerous dames to whom the duke had formerly extended his favours, he knew not which to select as his opponent, for none seemed at present to enjoy it specially. Nevertheless, the suspicion stirred the duke more than the most judicious arguments. He announced a resolve of marching to the relief of Rouen, which was then sorely pressed by famine and the English arms, with the whole of his forces and those of the crown of France.

The duke determined to command the army in person, but he caused preparations to be made to escort the king in its ranks. Charles was at the period in a state of sombre lunacy. But he had some vague idea of a great misfortune having befallen him; for, when De Giac suggested to the queen the possibility of using the influence formerly enjoyed by her prisoner over the mind of the king, it was found to have vanished. Charles had no longer any confidence in his angel, but loaded him with reproaches, and banished him from his presence as an impostor! Yet the duke was afraid to leave his only

symbol of lawful sway in the hands of the queen, or in danger of a similar coup-de-main to that which had placed it in his grasp.

After a fruitless struggle with the will of her ally, Isabeau resolved to join in the expedition, in dread lest in her absence something might be concluded to her prejudice between the belligerents. She was very well aware that, interest apart, the duke had no respect nor regard for her of any sort. She feared that her presence should be thought not essential to any solemn act of government, and she dared not remain in Paris among a populace who detested her, unprotected by a powerful army.

Greatly to the surprise of the Burgundian chivalry, Owen Tudor also demanded permission to join them in this expedition against the English. Hitherto he had obstinately refused to be considered in any other light than as a prisoner of the faction into whose hands he had fallen. But apparently the delightful captivity he suffered in the Louvre had reconciled him to the cause. At least it was thus that the mirthful Lady De Giac interpreted the request which he made, in a full conference of the two courts, to the queen. Her laugh refuted to general conviction his vehement and even angry assertion that he knew not his royal custodian's intention of sharing in the expedition. It was not, indeed, commonly known, but the triumphant smiles of Isabeau, and the peculiar laughter and wink at his fair ally with which the duke assented, satisfied the court that she had found private means of communicating the fact to him.

Another circumstance was remarkable in this expedition—the obstinate resolution of the Lady De Giac not to share in it. In vain did the duke himself endeavour to prevail upon her to become a witness of the approaching glories of the chivalry she so often compared disadvantageously to that of England. In vain did the imperious Isabeau deign to entreat her to be of the company; in vain did even her lord and husband, angered at her obstinate refusal of the duke's entreaties, or perhaps, for the first time, at the singular urgency and vehemence of the manner he made them with, peremptorily declare that she should comply with the royal wish. The Lady De Giac, usually the model of wives in docility and obedience, as resolutely replied that no force, not to mention persuasion, should induce her to yield compliance in this respect. There was some playfulness, but more of sibylline gloom and denouncement, in the words she added. She reminded the listeners that of old she was skilled in astrologic science, and declared she had still enough remainir

to know that any violent opposition to Henry of England could only end in ruin and disaster! Therefore she would not share in an expedition which would complete the destruction of France. The Lady De Giac was known to be neither of timorous heart, nor feeble mind; and, though her warning had not the effect of stopping the advance of the army, it spread doubts and misgivings through all its ranks.

John the Fearless himself seemed greatly troubled by the timorousness of his once unshakeable partisan. The Lady de Giac evidently went out of favour, and his ill temper frequently vented itself in explosions that struck terror into the court. She who had been the object of his almost exclusive admiration and attraction, seemed to pass suddenly out of the range of both! De Giac was irritated, and with more causes than those he alleged. There was something in the violent disappointment and ravenous entreaties of the duke that powerfully attracted the attention of the husband. But the politician ascribed his anger to the sudden discovery he alleged he had made of the reality of his wife's seemingly playful opposition to his opinions, which, hitherto, as a vehicle for her sarcasm and scorn of the French nobility, he had tolerated and even enjoyed. The statesman was justly exasperated to find that his wife exerted herself seriously against his favourite and most elaborate measures. But, in spite of her continued opposition and resolution not to leave Paris, he persevered most resolutely in his counsels—and at length the Burgundian army marched towards Normandy. The duke and his minister went with it—the Lady de Giac remained in Paris. Nevertheless, as a mark of her own private coincidence of sentiment, Isabeau de Bavière appointed her, during her absence, to the superintendence over her royal daughter.

It would be difficult to say whether Owen Tudor left Paris, or the Lady de Giac remained in it, with the least enviable sentiments. But the triumph, bitter as it might be, was clearly with the Lady de Giac. Owen had long suspected and dreaded her purpose. The playful interpretations she had so often made in public presences of the signs of melancholy and secret passion his demeanour exhibited, and to the queen herself, had too often provoked his indignation not to enlighten him as to her drift. And now he left Paris in the immediate train of Isabeau, conscious that he had offended the princess, and might reasonably have excited her suspicions by his seeming understanding with his imperial jaileress, yet without the power of offering any explanation, and almost certain to return, if at all, an object of the contempt and hatred of Isabeau de Bavière!

In this condition of his affairs, Owen Tudor could perceive almost no hope remaining but in the glory he might achieve on the field of battle, to redeem his name and set him above the power of the vengeance he had provoked—or might be compelled to provoke.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ANCIENT COURT INTRIGUES.

But even this prospect was destined to close suddenly. The army of the Duke of Burgundy halted at Beauvais, and, notwithstanding the entreaties of Rouen for aid, and its desperate condition, advanced no further. Without cognizance of any of his ministers, even of De Giac, the duke returned to Paris —and thence sent word to stop the whole expedition, and for the army to return.

The universal discontent spread by this measure was deepened by circumstances, in the breast of Owen Tudor, to the fiercest wrath. Various reports were circulated on the duke's motives. Some reported that an insurrection in Paris was on the point of breaking out; others whispered that he dared not provoke the English too far, lest they should substantiate his former traitorous negotiations with them, and thus destroy the remnant of his popularity. The duke himself endeavoured, by innumerable manifestos, to throw the blame of the failure on the dauphin. He declared that his own forces were inadequate to raise the siege of Rouen against the powerful and strongly-intrenched army of his antagonist, and announced that, unless the dauphin would unite in the effort, it was impossible to attempt clearing the soil of France of its invaders.

The drooping standards of the army returned to a city already famous for its sarcastic wit, and the murmurs of the Parisians swelled the military clamour. But all alike failed to alter the determination of the duke, or to disturb the enjoyments of the court. In sheer defiance, Queen Isabeau gave a magnificent feast to celebrate the bloodless issue of the campaign, and nearly all the chief personages of both courts and camps were present at it. Another singular reversal of events had taken place. The Lady de Giac was restored to all her pristine favour with the duke—or perchance the terrible syren had restored hers to him at a heavy price—while Owen Tudor was completely out of all grace with his royal jaileress.

The studied coldness and excess of respect which he displayed during the whole expedition towards Isabeau had, he was well aware, nigh ruined him in her esteem. A commar

to attend this banquet was the first mark of kindness, or even of remembrance, that for a considerable period she had bestowed upon him. And now he occupied a fitting place for a discarded favourite, standing alone in a dark recess of the magnificent hall of the Louvre, in which the revelry was held.

At an opposite extremity of the chamber, in a festal blaze of light, effulgent with beauty and the secret joy of her triumph, the Lady de Giac poured forth to a courtly audience some of those lays that had once enchanted the heart of Owen Tudor. Isabeau de Bavière, stiff in cloth-of-gold, listened in admiration to the songs of the daughter of Jean de Troye. The harp resounded beneath her touch, whose every chord recalled some affecting reminiscence to the soul of the exile of Arvon. The fair Catherine, who had not even deigned to glance at him since his return from his inglorious campaign, listened with delight, and with a species of secret understanding, to a roguish and by no means fitting legend of one of the meetings, contrived with so much difficulty and ingenuity, between Tristrem and his beautiful queen. The story, it was evident, was not displeasing either to the betrothed of the great Henry, or to her mother—who had been the handsomest woman of her court, and whom her courtiers persuaded that the case was not at all altered. The moral of the tale, if moral it might be called, excited the joyous applause of Duke John, who leaned over the minstreless as she sung. The superiority of stolen and illicit delights to those which virtue and honour sanctioned—Ah, Huéline, too well thou didst remember, or too well image forth! At all events, recollections returned on Owen Tudor which almost for the first time roused a vivid and burning sentiment of jealousy in addition to the other keen provocations in his heart. He was gazing at the minstreless, and watching the gleaming eyes of the duke, with clenched teeth, breathing hardly through his nostrils, when he felt himself gently jerked by his golden chain, and, starting round, he perceived De Giac. It was rarely, indeed, that the minister spoke to Owen Tudor at all, still more rarely with any appearance of kindness or confidence in his manner, and now there was both! He seemed to be in a pleased and merry humour. "Congratulate me, Sir Owen," he said, smilingly. "Mine enemies need not rejoice so much, as I hear they do, in the defeat of my policies! The work is, as it were, mine own, since it was my wife who recalled the duke with certain information of a projected rising in Paris. You wot well, Sir Chevalier Sauvage, that she can read their humour—can tell what storms are abrewing in the sea, by the ripple of the surface. Else, I own, all things seem calm enough to me."

These words poured almost conviction into Owen's mind of the reality of his suspicions, and stirred so many founts of bitterness in it, that it was no wonder his reply was deeply tinged with many kinds.

"Where are the signs of this insurrection, then?" he exclaimed. "Our cowardly flight may produce one—other exists not. But your gorgeous wife, messire, is of a companionable humour—and nothing short of sovereign homage deems she worth receiving. —Therefore were we recalled to shame and the laughter of the world, that the Duke of Burgundy might—Ah, by heaven! see you there?"

"What is to be seen, messire?" returned De Giac, after a moment's pause, and in a strangely altered voice. "The duke is fond of flowers: he is scenting the sweetness of the nosegay in my wife's girdle: I gave it to her. She likes all flowers but roses!"

"What crimson mark is that, then, left on her rounded shoulder?—nay, methinks it spreads from her beautiful bosom!" said Owen, with a bitter vehemence of tone that *seemed*—for we by no means report Messire de Giac's sayings as expositions of his mind—to awaken only satiric mirth in him.

"Noble chevalier, I thank you for this jealousy on my account!" he said, with a smile. "The rather, that I fear you have not quite forgotten how the Lady de Giac was once Huéline de Troye!"

"I have not forgotten it, and you would do well to remember it—if you knew all, noble councillor!" said Owen, yielding for an instant to the exasperation and agony of his feelings, and with a meaning in his eyes that startled De Giac internally—for he gave no outward sign.

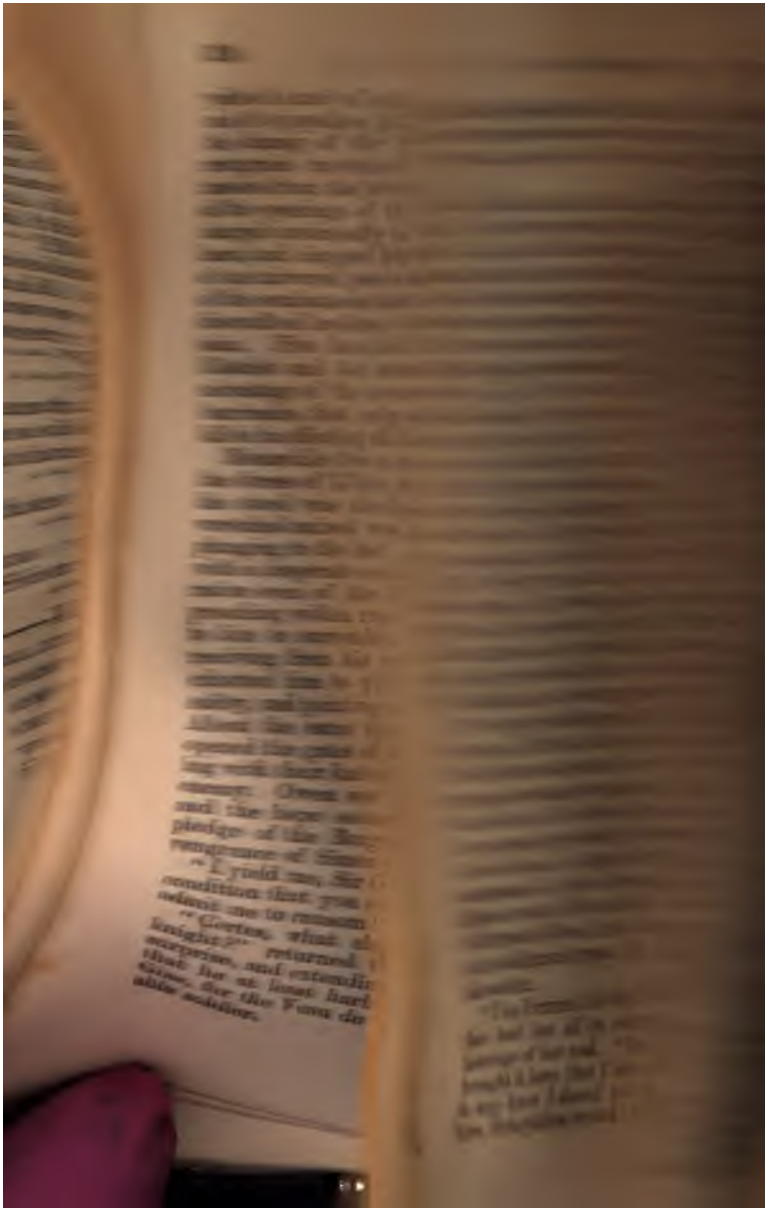
"It is enough for me to remember that she did ever hate and despise thee, knight!" replied De Giac. "But thou art a melancholy prisoner, and therefore thou hast strange thoughts of us all."

"Hate and despise! be not too sure of that, Sir Pierre," said Owen. "But, since thou believest so thus far, with the more reason, I tell thee to beware of her subtlety!"

"Speak plainly, knight; I am not good at solving riddles, yet am naturally of a curious fantasy, that would seek out even the marrow of things hidden," returned De Giac.

"Then, were I you, sir councillor, I should be curious to learn wherefore intelligence of so great moment, so nearly concerning your office, was not first communicated to you, sithence the espial was your wife," said Owen. "And, moreover, I should be special to learn in how many audiences the tidings were delivered, and where those royal interviews were granted."

"I have already asked these trifles of indifferent serving men-



of retaliation for the disdain of the Princess Catherine might mingle in his motives, and of the scorn and ill-founded arrogance of De Giac. Above all, there was something irresistibly alluring in the thought of once again sharing the smiles of the minstreless. Yet he hesitated.

"I rarely speak to the Lady de Giac—perchance, as you say, messire, because I remember too well that she was once—another!" he said, with emotion. "I know not how to address her now. She will marvel at my speech."

"By so much the more shall it be noted," replied De Giac. "See you how her nosegay lies unheeded on the ground! You may be supposed to observe it—arriving suddenly—without offence!"

The nosegay and its associated recollections gave Owen the necessary determination. De Giac remained in the recess where they held the conference, while he advanced and joined quietly among the groups of courtiers. In a few instants the politician, who watched him with extreme eagerness, perceived the stately and graceful figure of the young mountain chief entering within the circle of light immediately surrounding the royal personages and the minstreless. He saw him stoop and raise the flowers with some words which he could not hear; but, if the duke's licentious familiarity had heightened her complexion, this act of homage, slight and even timorous as it was, suddenly paled it. De Giac remarked, and a devouring suspicion fixed its fangs inextricably in his heart, the intense, wild, reverberating flash of the glance she cast upon Owen Tudor as she mechanically extended her hand to take the flowers. But the duke snatched them away very rudely, and exclaiming, "Nay, none shall repair this lady's injuries but her sworn knight of Burgundy!" himself replaced the flowers in a manner which in any but a royal servitor would have been thought not a little indecorous. The minstreless seemed to feel this rudeness, for her colour returned in a rush. Yet she thanked the duke for the honour he conferred with a strange confusion and iteration,—and then again her eye sought Owen's. De Giac heard that he said something which fixed all eyes upon him—those of the queen and princess especially. The purport seemed to be an expression of envy of the flowers—of their happiness in contributing to her pleasure—or some vague compliment of the kind. "Look to it, fair sister! *your prisoner shares the fate of the rest of us!* Struggle as men may, and though the fruit be well guarded of serpents, those who gaze must long! But woe to him who leaps the garden pale!" said John the Fearless, with flashing eyes, and a fierceness of expression in his look at the Welsh knight, not unlike that which jealousy might be supposed to exhibit in so violent and uncon-

trollable a temperament. The Lady de Giac seemed not to notice the circumstance—perhaps did not. Her hand wandered among the strings of the harp, and drew forth some wild pathetic notes that melted Owen's heart with recollections, for they were part of a Welsh strain he had himself taught her in the days of their dawning love. And when she saw that he too was troubled, the music flowed more hurriedly from her fingers, like the sighs of a breaking heart, and she sang a lay, which was perhaps an improvisation, more probably the habitual musings of her heart poured into verse.

ROUNDELAY.

Dost thou remember?—If in those words there dwell
No magic, vainly ask I; all broken is the spell!
Vague as the moony ocean, as wild as its mad wreak
Are the thoughts my heart would utter, but words can never speak!
Though glory, power, and beauty may starlike gem thy sky,
Oh, dost thou not remember?—Those tears reply!

Do *I* remember?—Though fain I would forget,
'Mid pleasure's glittering darkness those phantoms haunt me yet.
When, in those hours of madness, my lips meet lips not thine,
'Tis recollection shudders, not rapture thrills, in mine!
'Tis the tempest's withering glare when mirth lightens in mine eye!
Oh, do I not remember?—These tears reply!

Yet why remember?—Since all the past is sped
Vainly as dreams restore us the ever-vanished dead!
Since nought is worth regretting—remembrance—but the power
And freshness of enjoyment, the dews upon the flower.
Since these are gone for ever, life but a lingering sigh,
Oh, wherefore, heart, remember?—Still tears reply!

And yet remember!—If but to yield some glow
To the future's chilly deserts, like sunset o'er the snow!—
Or it might be—love, answer! but not with words—some gleam
Around thy heart may wander—may half recal that dream?
Its shadows glow more richly than all possessions nigh!—
Do we not both remember?—Let tears reply!

A kind of mad defiance and recklessness were kindled in the soul of the young Welsh chief by this strain. Music had ever a mighty power over his heart, and this was so fraught with tender and overpowering recollections—such wrath of hatred and rivalry was stirred in his soul against the duke, that he himself knew not how it happened, nor did the too impressionable and passion-dazzled minstreless; but the whole court was in a manner struck into an ominous and dreadful silence under the frowns of the duke and of Isabeau de Bavière; while the lovers that had been, joined in a laughing, wild, wine-sparkling interchange of raillery that denoted foregone conclusions undreamed of by many, with all its seeming lightness and gaiety. They reproached each other's mutual silence and long disdain with a reckless profusio-

of delight and exhilaration in the change, allusions, laughter, tears, a species of delirious abandonment, which all that was known of their past history by no means clearly explained—to the listener at least. The Chevalier Sauvage certainly over-acted his part, or rather he forgot that he was acting one at all, and yielded to the impetuous flow of the passions which possessed him so completely that he passed all the anchorages of prudence. The spell was only broken when Duke John, in a stern, harsh voice, requested the queen's permission to retire, declaring himself that he was weary. But the haughty Isabeau, far from being offended at this commentary on the amusements she had furnished her guests, pointed it emphatically on her proper experience, and drove up the whole cavalcade with something of disorder and disgrace, by announcing that she would herself be the first to retire, to give the duke's retinue way. The duke hurriedly inquired for his master of the household, Sir Pierre De Giac; and when that dignitary's lady was startled into observation, and requested leave to seek him, he gave so rude and stern a reply, that all present were amazed. "Nay, madam, I will employ some more zealous seeker for a husband than a wife; you need him, to my thought, as little here as ever you did elsewhere."

"Then shall the Lady De Giac carry with us to-night at the Louvre; we will school her to a humbler sense of duty," said the wife of Charles VI. with seeming playfulness, but with an angry and troubled countenance. "Be of our chamber to-night, Lady De Giac, and I doubt not your grace shall find your faithful master at his usual post in your hôtel of Artois; for he mostly thinks it enough merely to air his court suits at our festivals."

This hint was taken more readily than Queen Isabeau imagined; and her royal guest did not again behold his favoured minister until he reached his palace. De Giac was there, waiting as usual in the bedchamber of his royal lord, in which they held their most confidential and terrible consultations. Duke John himself was in a very stormy mood; but the morose gloom of his counsellor struck him in spite of his own preoccupation. Perhaps Owen Tudor was not so far mistaken in deeming that something of the dread which the tiger feels for the serpent was in his heart. At all events, he dismissed his retinue suddenly, and throwing himself, still dressed, on his couch, so that his face could not be very clearly discerned in the light of the lamp that hung from the canopy, he inquired what ailed him, what ill news were afoot, that he looked so sad.

"Messire!" replied De Giac, stretching his long bony limbs on the andirons of a huge fire, but, contrary to his usual custom in

these interviews, continuing to keep his eye on the duke. "Messire! you would not have me rejoice in my evil hap? And truly your despisal of my counsels persuades me that you begin to deem me an old man—a dotard, whose ripest projects may be cast aside to pleasure any light whisperer—no matter who!"

"Care not what I think, if your young wife is not of that opinion too," returned the jovial Duke John. "By my fay, I hold you well appayed for everything in having holy sanction to kiss her when you will!"

"Of all the rewards your grace has conferred upon me, it is indeed the only one that I would not resign again to your service—I that was ever willing to yield my life in your behalf," replied the minister. "And it is because I so greatly value it, my redoubted lord, that I humbly entreat your permission to retire with my wife from your court, where my policies are held but as meshes to tangle flies, and her beauty is a lure which an old man, buried in cares of state, may well fear to leave exposed to the breath of such a court as this of Paris!"

"What! hast thou any reason to doubt thy wife's fidelity, De Giac?" exclaimed the duke, starting up on his couch, thrown off his guard by the sudden violence of the emotion that assailed himself.

De Giac saw, or thought he saw, that the duke's mind reverted to the late scene between Owen Tudor and his wife. But he brought it back to nearer considerations by the suspicion and malign scrutiny in the eyes he fixed upon his master, as he replied, "My lord! what think you? Have I not cause?"

"That was my question!" replied John the Fearless, even his complexion wavering, but continuing with a tart smile, "well, as thou sayest, Pierre, it cannot be denied thou hast something too much of the autumn yellow on the harvest of thy love! And thy wife is in the richest flush of summer!"

"I am proud your grace—so excellent a judge—should think so," replied De Giac. "But your question is soon answered; for, if I thought I had substantial reason of complaint against my wife, my redoubted lord, you have not now to learn that I have subtleties in my head, and weapons in my grasp, to avenge me!"

De Giac played spasmodically with the hilt of his dagger as he spoke, and he noted that the duke raised himself so as to obtain the command of his habitual defence, a battle-axe hanging over his pillows, as if he took the threat personally! It was a sign that escaped not the agonized vigilance of the politician.

"Tut, man!" said the duke, staring at him. "Old as you call yourself, you are still a man, and would not hurt—a woman?"

"I thought not of that!" returned De Giac. "'Tis like enough that I love her too well to do her justice—in such a case—were

[illegible] For [illegible]

[illegible] There [illegible] discovered one."

[illegible] results being [illegible]

[illegible] or one of the [illegible]

[illegible] he said. "[illegible] sufficiently [illegible]

[illegible] and his [illegible]

[illegible] the first place, and [illegible]

[illegible] the duke's [illegible]

[illegible] he said, "[illegible] ladies' eyes [illegible]

[illegible] the duke's [illegible]

[illegible] the duke, with sudden [illegible]

[illegible] upon the man whom [illegible] men in my place would [illegible]

[illegible] and rejection he [illegible] fear not— [illegible] and she shares nothing [illegible]

[illegible] replied De [illegible] I should fear nothing."

[illegible] and his laugh [illegible] and day ever after, "thou [illegible] who know no better are [illegible] and I gave thee thy rose from the

stalk! Set your wise head at rest. She hath ever professed to me the utmost contempt and scorn of these smooth velvet-bearded boys, and sworn—were her love to decline from its allegiance—it should be on a knight who had seen wars and death elsewhere than in minstrels' songs, and knew how to defend the wrong as boldly as the right!"

"That is but shrewd comfort, messire; there are many men of such make in your court, specially those who were with you in your far wars against the Saracen!" said De Giac. "Nay, 'tis those very professions I fear; else might I abundantly confide in my wife's resentment against the Chevalier Sauvage—in his studied coldness and neglect of her! Alack, I have better grounds for apprehension than your grace yet wots of."

"What are they? By the life of God! I will myself avenge thee, if thou canst bring any proof against them!" said the duke, yielding to such a sudden tornado-like burst of fury that De Giac's jealous phantasy scarcely needed more proof. Yet he added to that he had acquired and his own agony by relating the particulars of Owen's adventures in the Boucherie, so far as they were known to himself, of which until then Duke John had never heard. The exasperated commentaries of the patron revealed far more than the sympathy he meant to express.

"Yet, after all," he said, when the story was concluded,—and De Giac noted his satisfaction in finding that result so favourable to Huéline, "I see rather matter of trust and triumph to thee, Pierre, than of fear, in this matter! Did she not reject him—and he her, in turn? What woman ever forgives such an injury?"

"But of late I mark a strange alteration in their manner, and your grace may reckón by the years of my service how much I am too old for my young bride!" said De Giac, bitterly. "Retaliation cancels injury—your grace thought so when you slew Orleans, who would have slain your honour! It may be that the time will come when these once lovers will think so too, being thus frequently together—I mean my wife and Sir Owen Tudor!—And, that your grace may know all, I will not conceal that what first stirred me to suspicion of himself was his endeavour to render me suspicious of—your grace!"

The start which the duke gave at this intimation, the thick drops that burst on his brow, startled the startler!

"Ay, indeed!—a sharp-witted rogue—what the fiend, suspect us!—who are so much bounden to thee, De Giac!" he muttered, confusedly.

"For power—perchance for life, messire," replied the minister, calmly. "For, when your own lion heart and princely wit had deserted you; when, before the princes of France you confessed the murder of the Duke of Orleans—yourself calling it so

[illegible] Great

[illegible] A message from the [illegible] by the Lady De Grae," struck his

startled sense almost simultaneously with the arrival of the messenger. Owen Tudor was in a manner petrified, and the courtly ease and tranquillity of the Lady De Giac formed a perfect contrast to the embarrassment and even terror in his look. She saluted him with graceful stateliness, and, observing with a smile that there was abundance of light in the chamber, ordered the pages to take their torches and await her return in the corridor below. The servitors reverently bowed, withdrew—and the Chevalier Sauvage was left alone with the Lady De Giac!

"Pardon me, noble knight, if I detain you from better employment of your leisure, but I obey sovereign commands—the commands of the Queen of France, messire," she said, with some slight tinge of mockery in the pompous tone she assumed. "I pray you do not stand in my presence! It is only by the strenuous orders of my lord the Duke of Burgundy that the dames of France admit me worthy of the courtesies due to the rank I have achieved; and *you* take pleasure in crossing his will."

"The Lady De Giac has always a right to—to—my homage and service!" said the Welsh knight, tremulously; and the Lady De Giac smiled and nodded at the stiff compliment as calmly, to all outward appearance, as if she had never been Huéline de Troye: only her glance never came into a direct line with Owen's.

"Then perchance, messire, you will aid me to put back my hood—it is too warm—and I would not you should think my burgher breeding blushes to deserve its court honour!" she continued; but, as Owen made no effort to assist her, she tossed off her mantle impatiently, and appeared so richly and elegantly garbed in a robe that shimmered with damasked silver and satin like a tissue of water and light, that Owen was struck with still deeper consternation and—admiration! He visibly shrunk back, and said, in a manner that was not mistaken by the Lady De Giac, "What, then, are the gracious commands of Madame Isabeau to her poor prisoner, on which she employs a messenger so every way worthy?"

A deep flush dyed the lady's brow for an instant, and then she replied, with a smile full of disdain, and yet of gaiety, "I comprehend all your impatience, messire!—And be not afraid of me! —I am only the messenger of love. Ah, I perceive that already you divine my purport, and snatch my tale untold! Lovers' eyes are of far vision! Why start you, knight?—My message to you is full of matter for rejoicing, nothing of fear—unless the difference of a few years seems to you so formidable—certes, they are not a score!"

"Speak your commands, lady, for—at this time—I am much troubled, and would rest," said Owen, sternly.

"I come not to disturb your repose, gentle knight, but"

[illegible]

[illegible] generally called in Paris, [illegible]

[illegible] false leman of the [illegible] Chevalier Sauvage.

[illegible] his grace's resolves; [illegible]" replied the Lady de Giac. [illegible], in this court, I should feign to mis-

understand your meaning, noble knight!—If at all, it is only necessary to conceal these matters when one has a plebeian husband like the Lord de Giac, who values the pawn better than the game!—To the matter! I have been your faithful friend in the affair of that flight from the English, at least with your royal lady! Never, since the days of the too faithful Brengwain, was bashful lover so warmly interpreted; lovelorn suitor more constantly advocated, than you, Chevalier Sauvage, by me! I am a minstreless, as perchance you may remember! Our science gives us, or we give it, large insight into the human heart. I have loved—how fervently, how madly, how all-possessed—it is not now to tell; and the signs of passion do not readily escape my observation. Never for an instant has the zeal of my friendship slackened in your behalf! The language of your tender and melancholy eyes—without vanity, a courtly jongleuresse may say it—took charmed voice on my lips! I have explained to your royal lady the innumerable tokens of passion my skill observed in your smiles, in your gestures, your secret sighs!—not too boldly, I trust, but as if in idle and laughing mockery, to the imperial inspirer! And thus have I obtained this royal confidence!—the glory and the happiness of offering to your acceptance a royal heart! If I remember rightly, such will possess attraction irresistible to you! Its purity, its tenderness you can value at the fullest, being royal too! What is my reply?"

Owen was utterly silent for some moments, and then his passion of anger and grief almost vented itself in tears, as he replied,—"I will *not* believe it!—Let that be your answer to the Queen of France, if ever she sent you hither, shameless messenger of shame!"

"I understand—and will interpret. You would have the queen come hither to verify my legend in person!" she said, making a movement as if to withdraw.

"Ah, would to Heaven I had always had as stubborn obstacles between me and thy perfidy as the locks and bolts of my chamber shall prove to your old crowned serpent, if she glides hither!" exclaimed Owen.

"I counsel you, do not trifle so with my royal mistress! She is of ripe years and ripest passions!" replied the lady, calmly. "Or would you add to the glories of which your hints so often give listeners inkling, that of being in very truth won, like Helen of Troy, by force of arms? For, certes, I am convinced, if there be power in nitre and sulphur, or in battering-bars, Isabeau will win her way to her coy knight's arms."

"And deem you thus to raise impossible obstacles—obstacles to baffle destiny?" said Owen, maddeningly. "Your malice has already done enough—but more it shall not do!"

"Malice!—what malice is there, or can be, in obeying

commands of so gracious a sovereign and mistress!" returned the Lady de Giac. "The queen shall come to assert the truth of my words, since you thus skilfully persist in doubting them! This chamber is not ill fitted for a royal visitant—albeit I deem even this tapestry not so well wrought as those you were wont to think fairly limned in the chamber of Jean de Troye!"

"Go then; I doubt not you are what you announce yourself," said Owen, yielding to a torrent of passions. "Go, and tell your gracious sovereign and mistress, then, that I adore and worship her daughter even as I despise and loathe her and thee, and all of ye, faithless women of France!"

"I do remember me: your old monk taught you those words, cold as a frog in his cloisters!—But you are obeyed," said the Lady de Giac, curtsying deeply. "I can be faithful—at least to the delivery of a message." And she moved slowly, with her head sunk slightly on her bosom, as if deliberately conning it over, to the door. But, when she reached it, a thought seemed to strike her. She turned and looked round, and, as she gazed at Owen, something inexpressibly sad shadowed the unnatural lustre of the vindictive passions glowing in her countenance.

"If I deliver this message, Sir Owen," she said, "let me recommend you to extend the Flight of Beauvais!—to return to your allegiance, and take refuge in the camp of England, without delay! To-morrow, I misdoubt, will else find you a closer prisoner, in a less gorgeous dungeon!"

"I cannot flee; I will not flee! Here will I await whatever fate your united malice can inflict," returned Owen, desperately.

"The dauphin will receive you; fly to him!" said the lady, eagerly. "I must do my deed—fulfil my fate! But methinks I shall not feel altogether alone with it, whilst still you breathe the air of France!"

"I am a prisoner; my word is pledged; my ransom unpaid!" replied the Chevalier Sauvage. "I will perish here, and at least the tears of Catherine of France shall be mine!"

"The tears of an April cloud!—it is not with such tears that men should die to be mourned!" said the lady, with a flash of vehement feeling. "But the ransom shall be paid; I have gold at least! The ransom shall be paid!"

"Rather will I perish a million times than be once ransomed by thy gold—it is accursed too!—Begone, and leave me to my fate!" returned Owen Tudor.

"If it prove mightier than this obstacle, I, too, shall begin to believe and reverence it!" said the Lady De Giac. "Be it even so! Farewell, good knight: thou wert ever of a dubious mood. Give thyself a night's reasoning, and the Queen of France, I shall be distinguished from a plebeian, at least—by not

wooing in vain!" As she spoke these words, the door opened, and one of the pages entered with marks of great consternation.

"Lady, your noble husband, Sir Pierre himself! demands to see the Chevalier Sauvage!" he exclaimed.

"Let him ascend the stairs—I have my sovereign's business here—none other!" replied the lady, haughtily. "With you, Sir Owen, alone of all the court, methinks he would not suspect me!"

"Yes, yes, I have said—I have been obliged to confess, to hint—remember what has so lately passed!" returned Owen, fairly bewildered with this turn of events. "I pray you, lady, muffle yourself well, and quit these chambers with what speed you may."

"It cannot be; I must pass De Giac; and he hath not been so indifferent a contemplator of my form to be so easily deceived in it," said the Lady De Giac. "But what hints, what confessions, betrayer, hast thou dared to——"

"No, no;—yes, yes;—you have been my interpreter, Huélinc!—perchance I have been thine! But conceal yourself if you would not he should believe—ay, much more!" replied Owen.

"And where?" said the Lady De Giac, now sharing the consternation of the knight.

"Formerly you concealed me in your alcove—conceal yourself in mine!" he replied, breathlessly.

"Ah!—but what if with the same burden in it!" said the lady, shuddering convulsively.

"Fear nothing, fear nothing! . . . . Page, my lady the queen's communications to me are to be kept secret from all men! Go, and say I am alone, since thou hast said I am here!"

The page disappeared on the word, for he was court-bred; and Owen himself hurried the Lady De Giac to his alcove, closed the curtains on her, and returned to his seat almost as the politician entered.

"Leave us alone for a few instants, messires," observed De Giac to the bending pages; and there was that in the calm, concentrated gloom of his tone that enforced instant obedience.

"Are we alone? Can none overhear us?" continued De Giac, glowering vacantly around. "I have a secret of some slight importance to communicate; not of much; since it but concerns the honour of a man fashioned of potter's earth, of vassal clay! And I come to thank thee much for undeceiving me! Let us be familiar with each other, and thee and thou it; for methinks we share an anguish as brothers might their bread of life!"

"None can overhear us, none, none!—But let us speak low!" returned Owen.

"Ay, indeed! the court fools will make rare jests of it," said De Giac, with a slight gasp. "Perchance they do alrea

doubt, no doubt—when my back is turned! These antlers are so high and stately they overbranch the forest! Dost thou note them, knight?" and he made a wild wreathing of his hands over his head, till the blood almost spirted from the nails, and tore them asunder.

"What is the matter, messire? What grief is this we share together?" said Owen, endeavouring to lower the excited tone of his visitant.

"Thou art innocent of the joyous guilt thou didst hint against thyself—she loves and belongs to another!" returned De Giac, in a still more vehement and raised voice. "Hark you, messire! —for all hell shall ring with it some murky midnight—she loves neither thee nor me, but one that is well worth us both in such qualities as women esteem!—the great Duke of Burgundy."

"Nay, messire, you but suspect!—your misgivings are not well founded," said the alarmed Chevalier Sauvage.

"They were not mine—they were thine, knight! I have seen men, but I knew not they were capable of such ingratitude until thou didst unseal mine eyes!" replied De Giac, continuing with a ghastly smile, "It was thy jealousy illuminated mine. Thy murmurs in the return from Beauvais were borne by envious winds to mine ears, and at first I held them but the ravings of thy jealous discontent. Still they sowed suspicion in my heart: I watched and was silent! I could not believe in the perfidy of John the Fearless! This woman only could teach the bold badness of his nature how to deceive! But when to-night, in fulfilment of our concerted plan, thou didst feign—thou, with thy warlike beauty, thy matchless bloom of youth, to offer her, love—I did observe but too well that the passion it roused in him was jealousy! Yet, to be certain of it, I awaited him in his chamber, and—listen! I will tell thee all." And the too-sagacious councillor repeated aloud the substance—in many remarkable instances, the very words, of his recent conversation with the Duke of Burgundy. The bitter emotions that assailed Owen Tudor in the revelation almost swallowed up the terror inspired by the remembrance of her who listened, too, and would doubtless overhear what must contribute so largely to her already excessive exasperation. He laboured bewilderedly to effect some conciliation, to leave some chink open to the light. "I doubt it not," he exclaimed; "I doubt not that the duke might be jealous of me, for this good cause, that he himself can have no hope of success. Do not fear that, farther than his general liking for all —his gross admiration of every kind of female beauty—and your wife is beautiful, De Giac!—fear not any harm hath or can befall her or you! Her virtue, her honour, are known! Ere you wedded her, De Giac, alas!—remember you not, at your nuptials,

you compared her to some virtuous lady of the old world, and challenged my testimony?"

"Give it now, then!" returned De Giac, with a piercing gaze. "Let thine eyes meet mine!—Swear to me by thine hopes of bale or bliss hereafter—by the memory of that father thou dost so oft attest in his grave—that she came to mine arms as pure, as pure, as pure—aha, I see it all!—as she left thine!" And he laughed a short convulsive peal like the last rattle of death. "Say so, say so!—and I will believe the massive duke hath wooed in vain!"

"You saw, De Giac; you heard!" faltered Owen.

"I see, I hear!" returned the husband of Huéline de Troye. "And I will see—and all the world shall hear! They will not long elude my craft, work they as darkly as the moles of the centre!—What do I rave?—I will discover! I will make certain!—I forgive thee thy crime! She was not mine then! Thou wert young, and she—oh, what a matchless mine of all allurement hath she in her charms! And yet, in spite of all, in spite of *all!*—Let me but discover; but learn with certainty!"

"It is impossible to be discovered, for it exists not!—Your mind is empoisoned with foolish jealousies!" said Owen.

"Prove that, prove that, my dearest friend! my brother!" returned De Giac; and the planner of the massacre of the Armagnacs burst into an hysteric agony of tearless sobs. "Swear to me that I may believe in her, and, and—I *will* believe!"

"Believe in her!—Yes, henceforth I pledge my dearest faith, no reason for suspicion will be afforded you!" said Owen. "But if there should——"

"Ay, what if there should?" said De Giac, recovering the mastery of his emotion with astonishing suddenness.

"It will be but suspicion—baseless, unreasonable, as the clouds of day or the fears of night!" replied Owen.

"And if there should!" repeated De Giac, rejecting this consolation most emphatically, by taking no notice of it. "And if there should!—What then?—Youth, I am not given to confidences, nor know I now what to confide in this matter! But methinks this bitter taste would poison all the viands of the earth to me! My sole affections, my sole trust betrayed!—The nobles are right in their belief of my regard for them! Those whom I despise not, I hate; for, messire, I have been a vassal! The duke is the first peer of France! Let him remember that!—And for Huéline!—I love her well, but . . . let her look to it too!"

"But why not avoid all risk? Why not remove her from the court?" returned Owen.

"And shut her up in one of my castles? Keep the key of her myself? Watch her as a dragon watches a treasure in the bo-

of the earth," said De Giac, with another of his dissonant laughs. "But you know not John the Fearless, if you deem that any guardian—scarcely the grave itself—can keep aught he desires from his clutch by violence! I have thought of another means! Thou hearest the duke's purpose of sending thee on an embassage to the dauphin?"

"Truly, and will gladly depart on it, even this night—this hour!" said Owen.

"And I will tarry here to keep the duke firm to his purpose; do thou but succeed in winning the dauphin to listen to reason," said De Giac, musingly. "The service I shall do in this matter to him and to France may recommend me to his favour; I will change my office in the duke's household for the like in the dauphin's, and withdraw for ever from the dangerous neighbourhood of mine ancient master!"

"Become an Armagnac!" ejaculated the Chevalier Sauvage.

"Become a Frenchman; I have destroyed the Armagnacs, and have been too long a Burgundian!" said De Giac; and, with the extraordinary power he possessed of controlling his natural sentiments, in a few moments he seemed to become altogether the absorbed and sagacious politician which those who had suffered the most from the exertion of his faculties could not but confess him to be. The grand scheme of uniting all France by a firm alliance between the duke and dauphin; the arguments that might be urged in its favour; the means to be employed; the possible obstacles; nothing escaped the reach of the policies which he laboured to instil into the youthful secret envoy. All that troubled the ardent Welsh knight, or made him doubt the feasibility of the plan, was his knowledge that the Lady De Giac was listening. Still the conviction that the suspicions against her must excite her apprehensions, that dread of the menaced discovery might baffle her means of counteraction with the duke, suggested hope. At all events there was desperation in remaining; and, before De Giac left the great tower of the Louvre, Owen had promised to depart at daybreak on his mission, being solemnly assured that the duke would pay his ransom, and make an apology for his absence to the queen, which should perforce content her. De Giac, indeed, sufficiently hinted his knowledge of the peculiar kindness of Isabeau to her young captive, by advising him not to tarry to make his farewell in person. The Chevalier Sauvage waited until his visitor was certainly gone, before he even ventured to glance at the alcove. But some time elapsed, and all possible danger of an abrupt return was removed, ere the perfect silence observed in the concealment excited his apprehensions, and induced him to approach, to ascertain the cause, at every risk. He found the Lady De Giac reclining on

the couch, apparently asleep, her dark hair floating in disorder on the pillow, her eyes closed as if in slumber, but the lashes heavy with tears.

"Huéline!" he said, and partly in the hope of mitigating her anger, partly affected by ancient recollections, he stooped and pressed his lips to her brow.

"Judas!" was her reply; and starting up she looked at Owen with eyes that did really for the first time express hatred—fierce, unmixed hatred—of *him!* "Judas!—depart on thy mission; I return on mine."

"All may yet be well, Huéline!—Thou hast but to take the caution these suspicions of De Giac may well infuse—unfounded though they are!" said Owen, detaining her with some difficulty as she tore herself past him towards the exit of the chamber.

"Nothing may be well, nothing shall be well!" she replied with furious vehemence. "Thou hast deprived me of the only being whose respect—wretch as he is—I had retained or valued! Henceforth—but go on thy mission! These suspicions of De Giac, these suspicions thou hast infused, I will not baffle, but confirm! They are *not* unfounded: they are true! When thou didst abandon me to the arms of De Giac, when thou didst break the marriage of nature that was between us, then was I an adulteress—then did I become the common spoil I am and will be! Begone with that recollection in thy soul, and remember that my vengeance has but begun!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CONFERENCE OF MEULAN.

THE dauphin kept his court at Bourges, in Berry; and thither Owen Tudor hastened, taking his measures with judicious promptitude, for he left the Castle of the Louvre before it was possible for the Lady De Giac to communicate her intelligence. He was far on the road from Paris in the morning, when it was probable that the queen would imagine it time enough to order him into such restraint as her vengeful passion might deem necessary. And thus—without being able to utter a single word of explanation to the Princess Catherine; aware that his conduct was viewed by her with suspicion and indignation; certain that he left two women—one at least of remarkable genius and subtlety—both of great power and energy, at work in his destruction—a fugitive and an outcast—the heir of the mighty prophecy of Glendower proceeded on his embassy. Yet this very circumstance suggested hope to his elastic temperament. It seemed as if his destiny were once again fairly in his own hands, since the possibility of its fulfilment was involved in the result of his

mission. This idea gave wings to his speed, and furnished him with encouragements in the midst of every obstacle. To any other these would have appeared insurmountable. The dauphin was surrounded by the friends and relatives of the murdered Armagnacs, all thirsting for revenge, or animated to inextinguishable hatred by the loss of their power and possessions in Paris. Owen might have been convinced of this fact by the circumstances of his first interview with Sir Taneguy Duchâtel, whom he sought out immediately on his arrival in Bourges. The ex-provost's eminent services in saving the life and liberty of the dauphin had bestowed on him the highest place and influence in his councils, and his former hatred of the Duke of Burgundy was exasperated into a species of mania. The murder of his ancient general, and of such a hecatomb of his dearest friends and connexions, made even the assassination of the Duke of Orleans a trifle in the monstrous account of vengeance due. He received Owen Tudor joyfully and warmly as one who had escaped from the common wreck. These sentiments were somewhat diminished when he heard that his ransom was furnished by the Duke of Burgundy, and for the purpose of making him an envoy with offers of peace. He declared that, but for the extreme impoverishment of the royal treasury and the greatness of the ransom demanded, he would have caused it to be paid. And without inquiring what the terms proposed by the duke might be, frothing with fury like a wild boar, he declared the overture was only a project of the great murderer to get the last scion of French royalty into his power, to clear the way for his own ascent to the throne, and vowed that he would never consent to any peace which did not include the punishment of the ruthless destroyer! In vain did Owen Tudor—who had confided too much in Taneguy Duchâtel to have anything to conceal—detail to him all his reasons for dreading the approaching ruin of the monarchy in an alliance between Henry of England and Duke John. Taneguy swore that only by the sword should France either be recovered or utterly lost. Still he was troubled with the certainty of this approaching event, and felt the vastness of the danger involved. Owen was, besides, furnished with credentials so ample from De Giac, that it was impossible to refuse him an audience before the council, which he demanded. For the second time Taneguy formally introduced him to such an assembly, presided over by the dauphin in person. The young prince received him with his habitual benignity, and with even so much of distinction as sufficed to revive the old jealousies of the Lord de la Trimouille; and he was the only one of the numerous persons saved by his valour and conduct in the Châtelet who did not receive Owen with all

possible honour and welcome. Young diplomatist though he was, Owen displayed a tact, a patience, an energy, and eloquence in his task that surprised those who had only seen him wield arms. It was much to obtain even an audience on such a subject from a body of men inspired by feelings so adverse and vehement. The mild and careless dauphin himself was stirred by the fears and clamours of those around him into an insurmountable mistrust and detestation of the duke. The apprehensions of his courtiers for his personal safety were so amply justified by murder and massacre, that he might well be excused for sharing them. Those of his followers, and they were few, who had not the blood of friends or kindred to avenge, were still animated by perhaps a more powerful sentiment—the fear of losing the power and emoluments they enjoyed in the ascendancy which the Burgundians must acquire by a coalition of the factions. Under these circumstances, all the arguments and eloquence of Owen Tudor made but little impression. In vain from day to day, or at least from council to council, he repeated and urged them. The danger threatened was too remote to produce a strong effect; many even believed that, with all his faults, Duke John was incapable of so completely betraying his country and the royalty from which he sprang. Yet from day to day still more menacing tidings and rumours arrived. De Giac kept up a correspondence with his secret envoy, strictly confined to matters of a political nature, but in which he assured him incessantly that, unless speedy overtures were made, the negotiations with England would infallibly recommence. The duke was piqued at the unmoved aversion of the dauphin, and there were persons of great influence about him who exhausted every artifice to induce him to make an alliance with King Henry. They persuaded him that some composition would else be effected between the dauphin and the English, that would include his own expulsion from France, and from the power he had regained with so much difficulty. The queen laboured without relaxation at the English alliance and at her daughter's exaltation to the mighty throne which Henry would thus raise from his own realms and the ruin of France. She was suspected of a secret understanding and correspondence with the English, to effect this object; and Owen knew but too well that she was animated by motives more powerful even with an ambitious woman than any political ones.

But time elapsed, and his toils and supplications continued all in vain. Meanwhile events stood not still, and the continued progress of Henry forced on a decision. Owen was reduced almost to despair, and communicated the feeling in his answers to the pressings of De Giac. Meanwhile the latter frequently declared that he must soon be unable to resist the ac-

mulated weight of events which must at last sweep over all the barriers his persuasions and counsels could offer. Finally, as a last effort, he requested Owen to procure him a safeconduct for a messenger direct from the duke, who would leave no doubt of his intentions, if any still swayed the Armagnacs. Owen eagerly complied, for reports became every hour more rife and alarming of an approaching negotiation with England. He procured the safeconduct; and, sooner than he had thought it possible, it brought to his abode in Bourges no less experienced a politician than De Giac himself. Owen was astonished to behold him. Though he travelled without parade, much muffled and disguised, the danger of trusting his person among so many exasperated enemies was obvious. The treachery he was thought to use might justify any against himself. But Owen was still more surprised at the appearance of the man than even of the politician. A few months seemed to have done the work of years upon him. He looked as if consumed by some internal fire, and his eyes glowed and glared darkly as the flames of a limekiln by night. Owen made no secret of his wonder at the audacity of the minister. But De Giac merely smiled gloomily, and replied that he did not value his life, adding, after a pause—in comparison with his master's good and that of France! Moreover, he had a safeconduct—and then he remembered that he had left it behind. Such strange fits of absence and inattention, in fact, at times visited him, that it was not until Owen had thrice hinted his surprise that he should venture to leave the duke under the guidance of those most opposed to his policy, that De Giac made any reply. And then he said that he had found it useless any longer to resist his determination of effecting a peace with Henry, while the dauphin continued inflexible. He had even consented to a meeting between the English king and the duke, during his journey to Bourges, in the hope that so decisive a measure would convince the Armagnacs of the pressing danger of their affairs. He laughed as he said this, and added, with strange liveliness for so staid a politician, that they must hasten their resolves, as it was certain the renowned English king would quickly win all the women over to his side. The queen and his own wife were already his devoted partisans; and the youthful princess could not be expected to resist the dazzling qualities of that heroic manslayer. Irritated at this idea, Owen could not forbear observing that, perchance, political dangers were not the only ones to be apprehended in his absence. De Giac smiled again. "'Tis a strange task for a husband—to comfort a jealous lover!" he said, almost playfully. "Yet I am glad that I can do it—God wot!—comfort thyself, Wild Knight! I have observed them with all the eyes of a peacock's tail since we last met in con-

ference; and I am certain, absolutely assured, of her innocence. Only innocence could be so regardless, so unconscious of appearances! Is it not strange? That which hath infused suspicion into all the world has removed it from my breast alone! Ay, ay, John of Burgundy himself, though he is called the Fearless, dared not—unless innocent—have braved so openly, so recklessly, the comments of observation;—unless, indeed, he deems that, because I am peasant-born, because I am a courtier!—But no, no; they are innocent! Lead me before the dauphin's councillors; I must put the crown on my long services to a gracious master."

"You are an object of boundless hatred to the Armagnacs, and you have left your safeconduct in Paris," exclaimed Owen.

"They know not that—it is but a scrap of parchment; the spirit may be kept without the letter," returned De Giac. "I come to render the Armagnacs a service which shall balance what I have done against them. And hearken, knight, my wife is skilled in astrologic science, and she knows that I am not yet to die! My own heart tells me so. Place me amidst all the daggers of my foes, and I will fear them as little as I do the spectres of the massacred, which the sickly Parisians see now in every street."

Owen was obliged to consent; but he himself trembled at the effect of his announcement when he introduced De Giac as the bearer of the safeconduct and the secret envoy of Burgundy, to the Armagnac council. There was scarcely a personage present, from the dauphin to the meanest usher, who did not owe to his counsels the destruction of some near relative or friend. A hideous clamour instantly arose, which the prince's presence could not repress. One yelled out his son's name—another his father's—a third his brother's—declaring that he had slain them. The young Count d'Armagnac, whitening with rage, drew his dagger, and, but for Owen's interposition, would have plunged it into the ambassador's heart. La Trimouille demanded to know what had become of his gorgeous wardrobe, in the sack of Paris? But the undaunted and unmoved demeanour of De Giac did more to preserve him than even the laugh excited by this demand, and the angry entreaties of the dauphin.

"Brothers, fathers, sons, friends!—I bring ye what shall repay ye amply for the kindred ye have lost, for whose destruction ye should blame only the mad mob of Paris and your own cruelties, that maddened them!" said De Giac. "I bring ye power and offices—restoration to your castles and dominions—rescue from utter ruin!"

"And what for the royal blood of Orleans, serpent?" shouted Taneguy Duchâtel.

"Loyal blood, will boar!" was the reply, pronounced in such a tone, with so strange a glare of the eyes, that Taneguy was struck silent. "To you, Sir Dauphin, I bring a crown—which else will pass for ever from the brows of Valois to those of the Plantagenet."

It was well known to the Armagnacs how deeply De Giac was in the counsels of his prince, who doubtless held in his hands the destinies of France. Curiosity lent its aid to obtain him audience, and he used the first moment of silence in a manner that riveted attention. De Giac announced his master's journey to a conference with Henry, his resolution to make a peace with him on terms that should divide France, and restore the ancient kingdom of Burgundy, unless some speedy accommodation was effected with the dauphin. "How much it is my purpose and object to prevent this woeful necessity, my presence here may demonstrate," he concluded. "And, but for the urgency of his wishes, would my lord the duke have consented to put his faithful servant in such jeopardy?"

"There may be reasons for that," replied Taneguy Duchâtel. "Messire de Giac, your wife is fair!" and, kindling with recollections as he spoke, he arose and delivered so fierce and vehement an harangue, recapitulated all their wrongs so burningly, that again the murmurs swelled into tumult.

Owen observed with surprise that De Giac listened almost with an expression of satisfaction to the detail of the enormities which called on the Armagnacs for vengeance. When Taneguy reached the height of his fury, and became almost inarticulate, he calmly interrupted him to demand a private audience with him and the dauphin only, adding an emphatic assurance, that if he were able to state all his reasons—which he could not in public—he would engage to win over even Taneguy himself, the most opposed to the proffered union!

The very audacity of this declaration, in a man so grave and unwont to speak up to his meaning, certainly not beyond it, produced a great effect. Taneguy scornfully consented to the experiment, and, save that La Trimouille managed to insinuate himself into the company, the required private audience was granted to De Giac. The dauphin withdrew, with them for attendants, into a private chamber. Owen cherished but little hope of success, though he knew the abilities and eloquence of the minister. But so long a time elapsed in the audience that he began to take heart—and then to dread that some mischief had befallen De Giac. His fears were, however, removed, and his expectations joyfully excited, when, at the conclusion of a long interval, the dauphin returned with the three personages who had accompanied him. The prince seemed greatly troubled and agitated, and announced

to the council that he had received intelligence which rendered it absolutely necessary to attempt some reconciliation with the Duke of Burgundy. Its nature must be preserved a secret, but Duchâtel himself confirmed this assurance, and his adhesion silenced all cavil. In addition, the dauphin declared that, aware of the great service the Lord de Giac could render him, and tendering the safety of his person, he had resolved to lodge him in his own palace.

"Thou seest, brother," whispered De Giac to Owen, when the council broke up on this announcement, "my lord the duke confided my life to his enemies, not without reason; and my wife's generous trust is justified!"

A few days sufficed to complete the negotiation thus happily commenced. No time was to be lost: certain tidings arrived of the formation of a congress between the King of England, Duke John, and the queen regent. They were to meet at Meulan, a town on the Seine, about equally distant from Pontoise, whither the court of France had gone, and Mantes, where that of England was hourly expected. The dauphin and his advisers assented, in this extremity, to all the demands of the Duke of Burgundy, though they were doubtless such as would have delivered both them and France to his tutelage. To give assurance of the dauphin's sincerity, Taneguy Duchâtel was to accompany the two envoys on their return. Owen insisted on being of the expedition, only accepting for his personal security the rank of knight of honour in the dauphin's service, and an office in the embassy of Sir Taneguy, as commander of his escort. The great object now was to arrive in time to prevent the conclusion of any counter-alliance between the English and the Burgundians. The envoys accordingly took their departure, and hastened with all possible diligence to Pontoise. But the secret opposition to De Giac was as rapid and determined in its operations as himself. Not a moment of the precious opportunity afforded by his absence had been lost; and, on the very morning when they reached Pontoise, the duke, the queen, her daughter, and a magnificent retinue, were gone to meet the King of England at Meulan. The King of France, being in a fit of raving lunacy, was left behind.

Pontoise was filled with the soldiery of the large array which accompanied the duke and queen. The forces of the King of England were encamped round Mantes; but only a certain stipulated number of armed men on either side were permitted to follow their chiefs to the place of conference. The French court had not been many hours on the road; and, still hoping to arrive before anything irretrievable was determined, the envoys hastened on in its wake. Great preparations were made both for the grandeur and security of the congress. The chief c

Burgundian nobility, with a thousand knights and selected men-at-arms, accompanied the court of France. The King of England was to bring an equal number; and so jealously were these forces balanced, that, but for the well-known rank and power of De Giac, neither he nor his friends would have been suffered to proceed. As it was, none of their armed attendants were allowed to go with them beyond certain lines kept by united bodies of Burgundian and English troops. The place of conference was marked out by an inclosure of planks, in a field on the banks of the Seine. Three entrances, strictly guarded, admitted within its wide circuit, which was also defended by a deep trench and the windings of the river. At opposite extremities of the interior space were pitched two royal pavilions, surrounded by tents for the accompanying nobility, fenced in with strong barriers of oak. A third encampment on the right, similarly paled, was appropriated to the Duke of Burgundy, and altogether left a triangular space, in which was the open tent wherein the conference was to take place. These barriers were occupied by the guards and chosen chivalry of each potentate, in their most splendid array. A rivalry in magnificence evidently animated all the three courts; and even the iron English conqueror, usually indifferent to such displays, seemed determined to show himself off in a light that he knew to be the most dazzling in the eyes of his future subjects. All the splendour of the silver brocade of Isabeau de Bavière's pavilion, and of the white silk tents of her retinue, was eclipsed by the scarlet and gold velvet of those of the English king. Purple was the predominant colour of the Burgundian encampment. To this latter division the envoys directed their course; and De Giac soon perceived, by the crowded masses in the barriers, that the conference had not yet commenced. They were not yet apparently too late. Leaving the envoys of the dauphin to follow at their leisure, after introducing them within the barriers, he pushed on eagerly to the duke's pavilion. Owen watched him in, and then, full of hope and expectation, halted with Taneguy to gaze over the preparations and await his return. In his eagerness, Owen had scarcely yet given a thought to the kind of reception which might await him from Isabeau; but cogitations so much more powerful assailed him now, when his gaze fell on the flaunting magnificence of the English barriers, that he forgot it again almost as soon as the uneasy recollection crossed his mind. The English banners and the gleam of the shields of that renowned chivalry, brought back to his memory the circumstances of his early adventure at the Vire. His heart filled with regret and wrath when he remembered the disdain of Henry for his barbaric chivalry; and the marvellous opportunity in which they were brought together again suggested to

him an earnest desire and resolve to re-possess himself of the prophecy of Glendower and of the egg of destiny lost in the stolen combat of the Vire. He considered that it was very probable so excellent a knight as he of the Lion and Lily would form part of the monarch's train, and that he could not more openly renew his defiance of the English king, and reclaim the notice of the Princess Catherine, than by publicly demanding the restoration of his prophetic talisman. Engaged in these thoughts, Owen would scarcely have noted the passage of time but for the impatient exclamations of Taneguy Duchâtel. But when De Giac at length reappeared, the exceeding gloom of his countenance portended no good. "Women govern the duke," he said, "but they give him no portion of their inconstancy. I found him in consultation with a lady from the queen, while they armed him (my wife, it is true, Sir Taneguy!)—and in spite of all my arguments and entreaties, in spite of the intelligence I bring of your dauphin's unconditional yielding, he is fixed that the conferences shall be held. All I can obtain is, that ye may be present at it, no doubt that ye may bear the dauphin authentic tidings of his ruin."

"Then I have no further business here," returned Taneguy Duchâtel. "Our presence will serve only to win John better terms, which is no policy of ours. Since it may be no other way, I will return and sharpen my sword for his throat."

"Peace, peace! your presence will prop the duke's pride, and, when such towering spirits meet, who knows what may chance?" said De Giac. "Remember, Sir Taneguy, the stake is high, and he who leaves the game loses it."

"But I cannot behold the murderer with any patience, deprived of the hope you gave me!" muttered Taneguy, within the bars of his helmet.

"Patience—and still cherish it! It is as certain as that yonder strong sun, too, shall set," replied De Giac. "Look at me, Sir Taneguy, do I seem much ruffled? Yet is there a tempest churning within this breast of mine, smile as I do, for I have the duke's gracious command to lead you within his tent."

With much reluctance, the ex-provost of Paris consented to this arrangement; and, accompanied by Owen Tudor, he followed De Giac into the duke's tent. The female councillor had vanished, and they found the prince in the hands of his armourers. A hesitation and embarrassment in his manner, which he had not betrayed in her presence, somewhat encouraged De Giac.

"Ye are welcome, very welcome, though ye come something too late," he said to the bending visitants. "Sir Taneguy, of all my foes I love thee best, for thou art an open one, from wh

need fear only violence—not guile. Chevalier Sauvage, thou hast served me well; but wherefore hast thou returned among these women that hate thee?"

"Sir, I have not yet learned to fear the hate of women," returned Owen.

"In truth, thou hast more reason to dread their love!" said Duke John, with his boisterous laugh. "But, courage, no harm shall befall thee, since we hear thou art our cousin the dauphin's knight. Thy ransom had been duly paid, but that thy royal creditor took the pet, and would none of it.—Sir Taneguy," he added, with evident gloom, "thou and all the world may witness, I make not this peace willingly with our English enemies."

"What hinders then, sir ——," began De Giac, when he was interrupted.

"No, no; it is too late," the duke said hurriedly, as if fearful of his own resolution. "We must not stir with every wind—and are fixed now. Would it were all well over and done!—Saw you nought stirring among the English?"

"Nought but their banners, sir—those banners that waved over your valiant brothers' corpses at Agincourt," replied De Giac.

"Remind us not of that!—But why doth not Sir Taneguy speak?" said the duke, with a slight start.

"My tongue was sent hither only to bid your grace save France, and become the brother of its heir; why should I speak?" said Taneguy, roughly.

"It is true!—but what security could ye yield me of the dauphin's faith?" said the duke, with lingering hesitation.

"He will meet you, messire, wherever you may appoint, and swear brotherhood with you on the blood of Christ!" replied the ex-provost, very eagerly.

"Ay!—but we swore the same with Orleans, not many hours before he perished!" returned the duke, shaking his head. "Nay, we can only trust in the English. Let us do the Godams mere justice, lords; when they swear in earnest, they keep their oath."

"Hark, their haught king is ready! Your grace should be at his stirrup!" said De Giac, tartly, as a trumpet sounded from the English barriers. "'Tis the first time in France that a Valois has played lackey to a Plantagenet; but it will not be the last."

"Do not anger me, De Giac; I am womanishly peevish to-day!" said Duke John, impetuously. "Let my trumpets answer—I am ready."

"So is the queen!—How impatient is she, good housewife, for the ruin of France!" said De Giac, when, immediately after the duke's trumpeters had replied, a sudden blast from the royal pavilion of France marked indeed some impatience in its occupants.

These flourishes were part of an arranged formula, prescribed

by a most jealous adherence to etiquette. The curtains of the duke's tent were instantly raised, simultaneously with those of the regal pavilions at each extremity of the inclosure; the three barriers were cast down, and the open space in the centre filled almost instantly with splendid groups.

CHAPTER XXXV.

LOVE'S REVENGE.

The King of England came first into the area, habited, as became so warlike a monarch, in complete armour, but which seemed rather fashioned by the goldsmith than blacksmith, so richly was it wrought. A royal robe of ermine and crimson velvet, a baldric and crown of blazing jewels, a surcoat hanging to his knees, and proudly emblazoned with the arms of France and England quarterly, declared his exalted rank and pretensions. A military court, many of whose personages were very far from strangers to Owen Tudor, accompanied the king, glittering in the panoplies they had rendered famous. The Dukes of Clarence and of Exeter, Talbot, and Stafford were among these. The Duke of Burgundy should have been the second in the field; but the impatience of Isabeau de Bavière anticipated the etiquette to which she usually made herself strictly subservient. She came forth from her tent, dragging a train as magnificent as a peacock's, supported by a retinue of twenty ladies, and leading her daughter by the hand. The princess's train was borne by half the number of dames of rank, the nearest and foremost of whom was the Lady de Giac. It may be thought that Owen's eye fell with rapidity and intense anxiety on this group. But his alarm and resentment were almost equally excited by observing the happy and triumphant expression on the beautiful face of the princess, the coquetry that displayed itself in her movements, in her heightened and brilliant complexion, in the smiles she exchanged with the Lady de Giac! He marvelled not that her ambitious and revengeful mother should have exhausted the splendours of dress in decking the intended lure. But she herself seemed most cordially of the plot! All the loveliness with which nature had endowed Catherine of France was improved by some grace and wily fascination of manner that irresistibly forced upon Owen Tudor the conviction that her instructress had been his first enslaver! The Duke of Burgundy was the last to enter the area of the centre tent, and Owen came considerably in the rear of his retinue, with Taneguy Duchâtel. King Henry and the g[illegible] had met before the duke left his barriers, and he halted r[illegible]

fully to allow them time to exchange salutations. Henry advanced with a rapidity that contrasted strongly with the queen's slow majestic glide, but did not ill beseem a young monarch of so energetic a character. Nevertheless, as if recollecting himself, he halted abruptly as he approached, bowed with deep homage to Isabeau, and, taking her hand, a little bent his knee as he lifted it to his lips. Then, raising his bold, laughing eyes to the Princess Catherine, he gazed at her with an expression quickening in them as in those of the lion when it comes on a welcome prey! The queen was about to introduce Madame Catherine in state, but he interrupted her. "It needs not, fair mother and queen!—our heart already tells us, by its rough panting, that we see our hard-won bride! Nay, let French etiquette say what it will, we have earned a kiss—for we came not to France merely to win its castles and lands!" And with soldierly and kingly frankness, that became him as royally as his crown, Henry embraced the youthful princess so heartily that all the ladies present laughed, and yet the fair recipient herself seemed not at all displeased, though she blushed deeply. It was at the very instant when the lips of the royal knight were pressed to those of the blooming Catherine with such evident satisfaction, that Owen, whose gaze was naturally directed towards his mighty rival, and who had been for some time confusedly struck with a series of baffling recollections, suddenly and irresistibly—against every effort of his pride and will—recognised in him, his generous vanquisher at the fords of the Vire, the knight of the Lion and Lily! The name the conqueror had given struck him simultaneously, and he wondered at his own blindness in not recognising in Sir Henry Roy—Henry the king! But, that no doubt might possibly remain to comfort him, the king wore the famous egg and silver chain on his neck, but little congruous with the gorgeous ornaments and insignia of chivalry that graced his broad breast!

"Fair brother—and son, we hope soon to add—but until then we must reprimand you for this free courtesy to a daughter of France, and the Lady de Giac for suffering it!" said Isabeau, smiling, and playfully patting the king with the sceptre which she always carried on occasions of state.

"Madam, since the men of France cannot resist the King of England, how shall we poor dames and damsels?" replied the courtly Lady de Giac. "Nay, in truth, it should be a great happiness for us that have been taught to start at the very name of Henry, to find that the most valiant of knights is also the most courteous."

"We are not for the first time bounden to you, gentle Lady Giac, for helping us at a hard pinch!" replied the king.

"We have heard much of you, and are well content to find you look like your report! By St. George, whose garter we wear! —an we were not a plain honest wooer, that take one mate, and keep to her, we could feel tempted to make you observe secrecy by sharing the offence!"

"Nay, sir, my lord the duke would soon hear of it; and it would anger him!" said Isabeau, with a sly smiling glance, and not at all aware that the Lady de Giac's husband was within ear-shot.

"It would not anger me, lady; I am not so easily ruffled with women's pranks!" said the duke, who had been waiting with much impatience and vexation to be noticed. "But Messire de Giac, who is here, might not receive even my royal lord of England's courtesies with kindliness!"

"My lord, I am only a husband—let me count for nothing!" said De Giac, with the most amiable lightness and vivacity.

"I have heard it is your French custom of housekeeping; but, by my life, we will count for all with this sweet damosel of yours, or we are not so much of English mould as we deemed ourselves at Agincourt!" said Henry, laughingly. "Cousin of Burgundy, you are welcome! Forgive us if, in this noonday blaze of beauty, we were dazzled into forgetfulness of your well-desired presence."

The Duke of Burgundy accepted this apology, but with a very moody aspect, and proceeded to pay his respects according to the arranged ceremonial. It was observed that he omitted the act of homage which he had been prevailed upon to offer to the king, and merely bent his knee slightly and bowed his head, as if to one not greatly his superior, and certainly not his suzerain. Henry looked surprised, but returned his greetings with great marks of friendship and respect. The king himself then volunteered to introduce his accompanying chivalry to the court of France; and, if he took any revenge for the omission, it was in the proud stress he laid on some of the most glorious of those names, associated with the disasters and humiliations of all the French.

Duke John was not insensible to this covert warfare; and De Giac had skilfully revived in his mind the remembrance of the death of his two brothers, who fell at Agincourt. He was irritated at the peculiar cordiality of the young king's greeting with the Lady de Giac, for Henry's dissolute renown was not yet quite lost in the blaze of his glory. He saw that Isabeau triumphed in the success of her stratagems, in the power of her intended son-in-law, and in the humiliation of the duke himself. And therefore, when it came to his turn to reciprocate King Henry's civility, he introduced Sir Pierre de Giac first, with

warm an eulogium on his abilities and fidelity, that those who knew how opposed he was to the present negotiation could not but augur ill to it from the circumstance. Henry looked at the minister with something of the curiosity and mistrust with which a lion might survey a ferret, but made no comment. Yet even Henry started when, after rapidly despatching some intervening personages of high dignity and rank, John the Fearless almost hallooed out the well-known Armagnac name of Taneguy Duchâtel!

"Are our cousin the dauphin's affairs so desperate that even his good magician leaves him?" said Henry.

"Nay, sir, I trust they are more hopeful than ever, since your great majesty deigns to look so little pleased to see me here!" replied the bold Breton.

"Our sister will be better content to see her prisoner again, whom she favoured so much as to discharge without ransom," returned the duke, maliciously. "Here, madam, is Sir Owen Tudor, now holding honourable rank and service with the dauphin, as well he merits!"

"Cousin, you jest with us something out of season," said Isabeau, suddenly turning at this introduction, and with great astonishment and an unutterable expression of wrath and disdain recognising the Chevalier Sauvage. "What, he is here! Disloyal knight! with what face darest thou appear before me, after having broken promise and fled without ransom?"

"Nay, cousin," interposed the duke, "I did offer you his ransom, twice told, and you refused it!"

"Sir, as the very prince of all true chivalry, you may fairly decide the dispute among us—whether this knight was licensed to depart before his ransom was paid, being a prisoner on plight?" said the Lady de Giac.

"Is there no chivalry remaining in France, lady, that we cannot decide this matter for ourselves?" said Duke John, testily. "It is a question between the Queen of France and myself which we will suffer no stranger to arbitrate."

"If any lady so fair as Madame Isabeau would take me into imprisonment, she should not be quit of me at such a good market—yet I would pay no ransom!" said Henry, gallantly. "What ailed the knight to leave so blest a dungeon? Which is he, and what call ye him?"

"He is here, sir king," replied Duke John.

"And for his great scorn of ladies, and discourtesies, he is chiefly styled the Chevalier Sauvage," said the Lady de Giac, smilingly.

"I should remember him, for I baptized him in arms, and pro- he would prove the good knight he is," replied Henry,

who had been for some time earnestly surveying Owen Tudor. "We have heard of his defence of the Châtelet against your Parisians, Messire de Giac; and if ever we go to Paris, and he will take it our gift—since he knows so well how to keep the Châtelet—he shall have it. What say you, sir? Have you forgotten the Knight of the Lion and Lily, who is here to make good his title to both coats?"

"Is it possible, sire, that your highness was that most glorious knight whose generosity even more than valour conquered the Chevalier Sauvage?" said the Lady de Giac, with evidently delighted surprise.

"Nay, lady, it was a foolish emprise, unworthy of a king, but that I had bound myself by a foolish word to suffer no one else to silence his vaunts, and I would show all my rebels, even body to body, that I am born their master," replied Henry, smiling, and yet with evident surprise at the protracted silence of Owen.

"Sir king! if it be you that met me at the fords of the Vire," said the Chevalier Sauvage, at length, half choked with contending passions, "you will remember that I promised myself better hap when I had learned the manner of chivalric conflict! And the King of Scots did promise to give mine egg to a good knight who should maintain it against me."

"It pleased my gentle Jamie to consider me as the best knight he had then at hand," replied Henry. "I was never of his mind, yet I took it for that methought danger was threatened to the withholder; and, since your Welsh blood has not yet worked off its yeast, I will now yield it to the custody of Madame Catherine and of this fair court—and they may give it to any champion they will. We will proclaim a tournament to do honour to this royal meeting, if it ends as well as we hope; and the egg shall be the prize, with something of value to give it worth—such as the lands of a Welsh country long forfeited to us, styled Penmynydd. Thou wilt be among the combatants, we doubt not, Sir Owen. Lady, wilt thou stake the prize, for it is now thine?" And the gallant Henry loosened the silver chain from his neck, and handed it to the princess, raising the hand to his lips that received it.

"Yield it to me, lady! It is the horoscope of my destiny—a glorious one!—which I will defend against all the world, not in a mock tournay, but in mortal battle!" said Owen, with the most vehement eagerness and with flashing eyes. There was something of wonder and doubt in the glance of Henry of England himself; of warning and mockery in the look of the Lady de Giac; of stern and menacing observation in that of the queen. Catherine trembled as she took the precious pledge; but she revived at the encouraging smile and nod of the Lady de Giac

wards whom she raised her timorous eyes. They regained their sparkle and coquetry as she replied,

"Nay, sir," she said, very sweetly and distinctly, "resume your gift. Since it is to be the guerdon of the best knight, where shall we damsels of France find one to contend for the possession of this egg with Sir Henry Roy d'Angleterre? Keep it, my most redoubted lord!—the rather that, as you are already his vanquisher, Sir Owen of Wales cannot pretend to champion it thus madly—thus audaciously!"

"We will keep it against fate in arms, lady," said Henry, evidently pleased with this brilliant compliment. "Yet see how sadly our wild godson looks—as ready for tears as a widow when onions are cheap! And now it reminds us we have a fair pretext to restore him this plaything peacefully. Hast thou forgotten our wager of the egg, Chevalier Sauvage?—Royal ladies! it was compacted between us—for albeit as all may see his face is so fair that the vainest she might be glad to exchange with him, I nothing despaired of my hap since they told me in my schoolboy days how Dame Venus doated on Mars!—It was challenged between us, when he grew too vain on the score of his beauty, that whatever love he won in Paris I would win her from him, or forfeit this brittle pledge. But, since I have seen the beauteous damsel of France, she is for ever the continent of my desires, and I resign the struggle. Here is thine egg again, son of the wind and cloud!"

"Then is it well for me, sire, that our princess is so dazzlingly fair!" said De Giac, at this juncture. "For be it known to your great highness, that when my wife was the minstreless, Huéline de Troye, Sir Owen loved her, or said he did, in spite of much scorn and some injury, which were all his recompense."

"Huéline de Troye!—a minstreless? Wild Knight, and didst thou seek her out in Paris as thou didst swear to do that night we listened to her lay on the Vire?" said the king. "By heaven! we are much of thy taste in beauty; and but that we have no longer a heart to yield—lady, pardon us—but, rough as we seem, and must be in these rude times, we have a soul not at all unattuned to minstrelsy, and shall be glad to be of your listeners when leisure serves, and to pay such thanks as a king should yield, and as, we wot full well, we owe you."

"I shall be jealous, sir, and with glorious occasion!" said De Giac, with a creeping glance at the duke.

"Fear not, De Giac!—I will take care you shall have less cause than ever! Your dame will witness to my cares in your absence!" said the gross and violent duke, now greatly incensed, and the more from the unusual necessity of concealing his sentiments. The Lady de Giac flushed crimson, and turned from him

with an expression of contempt and even of abhorrence which heightened his anger and pique almost to an open outburst. Luckily the impetuous rashness of Owen interposed a break.

"Restore me, then, mine horoscope, sir king!—since you dare not maintain it yours according to the fashion of that glorious knighthood ladies' fancies endow you withal!" he said with a peremptory fierceness that instantly made Henry pause in his intended gift.

"Thine horoscope?—it is well reminded!" said Henry, calmly. "For, since this treaty is to wed us, it behoves us to provide that Wales shall have only a prince—not a king! And therefore ere we yield this parchment we must have cunning eyes to look into it, to know if there be fables in it to spawn traitors—which at times happens among your countrymen."

"Let me examine it, sire. The knight of Wales himself will acknowledge that I am well skilled in prophetic science," said the Lady de Giac.

"Be it so, bright dame!" replied Henry. "We could not find the trick to open it, or we might have had curiosity enough ere now to question conjurers on it. Your female fingers may have a finer inkle in their tips." And once more the king handed away the egg of destiny to the Lady de Giac.

"The good knight himself is too kind to keep us puzzling," replied the Lady de Giac. "Fair knight, I pray you let us see this mighty spell of yours—which you once deigned to waive in my behalf!"

"Try, and learn if it hath yet spells to baffle malice!—a wizard riveted it!" replied Owen, desperately.

"Then mark how Henry of England contends with Welsh magic," replied the king, laughing, but angrily clutching back the egg; and setting it between his strong gauntleted hands, he crushed the fine silver shell into a million fragments, and tranquilly presented the horoscope to the Lady de Giac.

She perused its figures for an instant with a playfully contemptuous smile that mocked the devouring eagerness in her soul; but something of solemn and prophetic darkness gathered over her countenance as she replied—"Yes, sire; yes, royal madam!—there is spawn to hatch treason indeed in this egg, unless my royal damsel of France scatters it to the winds!" she exclaimed. "This horoscope assures that the Chevalier Sauvage shall wed the daughter of a king, and be sire to a long race of mighty kings! There is no other daughter of a king in all France but Madame Catherine; and unless her disdain reassures us, sire, dread the wizard's spell!"

"What say you, fair Catherine!" said Henry. "Wilt thou take these crowns of ours in hand, or that which hangs in the

halls of Merlin? We offer thee the ruby of England, the emerald of Ireland, ay, and perchance the diamond of Ind; for methinks this little round of earth grows too small to hold the empery we would win so fair a bride! Or wilt thou inherit the prophecies of this pretty boy of Wales?"

"Methinks this jest passes the name, sire!" said Isabeau, with supreme haughtiness. "Our daughter is the daughter of a king, not even to be thought of save as the mate of one!" And she darted a fierce look at the princess, followed by one of deadly malice and triumph at Owen Tudor.

"We thought it scarcely necessary to take a jest in earnest; but since 'tis so,"—said the princess, with manifest confusion and agitation, and rending the horoscope of Glendower into almost as many pieces as its singular casket was crushed into.

"From this instant, then, we salute thee our queen and lady, sweet Catherine, say nay who will!" exclaimed Henry.

"Nay, sir, we have yet much to chaffer about ere that matter be so firmly settled," said the Duke of Burgundy, with a degree of menace and gloom in his tones that struck all present.

"Some poor dukedoms and countships, which we hold cheaply bartered with kisses from lips like these!" replied the young conqueror, disdainfully smiling until his eye fell upon the working and angry visage of his ally. "Fair cousin," he then continued, "we desire you to know that we will have the daughter of your king, and all that we demand, or we will drive him and you out of France—whither we cannot at this time say, being not so well skilled in divinity as your doctor, Jean Petit!"

Perhaps for the first time, the towering spirit of John the Fearless sank cowed and rebuked.

"Sire, you are pleased to say so," he observed, in a meek and dismayed tone, until suddenly his eye caught that of De Giac, and he added more resolutely, "But before you can drive my lord and me out of his kingdom, I make no doubt we shall so bestir us that you shall be heartily tired."

"Nay, royal lords, since our daughter's presence stirs this strife, she shall not appear again until ye have sworn to be brothers, and concluded a good and lasting peace," said the wily Isabeau, who perceived that Catherine's beauty had made the desired impression. "Retire with her, Lady de Giac; for it is full time we were at matters of more concernment than laughing at the arrogant follies of a barbaric boy that came among us in a goatskin!"

"We are glad of it, fair mother!" replied Henry, who was not unconscious of the womanish craft in this piece of policy. "We intend to yield so little of our grandfather Edward's rights that we are glad to be out of the range of smiles which would

more dazzle and confound us than all the ordnance of France! Sweet princess, shall we be your staff to the pavilion of France, whose damasks we are glad to see are of so bridal a colour?"

The princess accepted this honour with a deep courtesy, and the royal pair moved arm-in-arm towards the French barriers. The Lady de Giac prepared to follow: but suddenly pausing, and turning with a laughing vivacity that fascinated all observation but one,—"Sir Owen of Wales," she exclaimed, "I too need aid: and you are of so gentle and courteous a temper, you will not refuse it! Come with me; my lord Sir Pierre will not be jealous of you any longer, sithence he is now provided with so mighty and glorious a rival, whom I myself assure him is the most dangerous he did ever yet please to amuse his leisure with suspecting!"

The Chevalier Sauvage complied with this merry request, to the great surprise of the courtiers, and of Isabeau de Bavière, whose austere eyes questioned those of the Lady de Giac with visible inquietude. The reply she received seemed satisfactory, and Owen Tudor passed on with her at the moment when the English king returned from his excursion to the white pavilion of France. He renewed his courtesy to the favourite lady by drawing his gauntlet and giving her his hand to kiss, which she did with the stately ceremonial of the French court, on both knees. Some low-toned words of livelier import were exchanged, and Henry passed on without taking any notice of Owen—perhaps without observing him.

"Come, madame, let us take our stools, if the King of England permits us to sit in his presence!" said the Duke of Burgundy, in a surly under-tone. "The matter shall not be debated by ourselves only, as we at first projected. We are but little skilled in ancient parchments, and are so wont to trust in our learned councillor, De Giac's report, that we cannot talk without him. He shall come with us—or we will not there ourself!"

"Then will the whole English council demand to be present!" said the queen, with great vexation.

"So let them; the tent is wide enough!" returned the duke, testily. "Nay, Sir Taneguy Duchâtel shall be of the company too. We desire all France to know that we do not willingly give it for a spoil to our ancient and damnable enemies of England!" At this moment King Henry joined his courtiers, and proceeded into the central pavilion, where he took his seat at a table covered with cloth-of-gold. He arose again when the queen and duke arrived, together, as was arranged to prevent any dispute as to whether it was necessary for a king of England to receive a duke of Burgundy standing, as an equal, or sitting, as a suzerain! But Henry was both vexed and alarmed when he

De Giac!" replied Madame Catherine. "How deem you these gems of England become us?"

"As light the sun! Will it please you to see this gentleman, whose name is—Owen Tudor?" said the Lady de Giac, uttering the last words in a tone only audible to the princess.

"Nay, not till all is well concluded, for he looked angrily!" replied Catherine, with a slight laugh.

"He must be reconciled to his doom, or his Welsh sparks will begin to flash out!" said the Lady de Giac, with so much earnestness, that the princess, in much alarm, hastily desired her attendants to withdraw, and send in the messenger.

Both commands were very speedily obeyed, and Owen Tudor stood before his royal and plebeian loves in a strange perturbation of feeling. The Lady de Giac took pains to arrange the scene on a model which had never well left her memory; and in a few brief instants she had schooled Madame Catherine in her task. The princess reclined carelessly on her couch, and the Lady de Giac stood beside it, very much in the attitude of Owen Tudor when he guarded Madame Catherine from a Maillotin hostess in the Boucherie.

"You are silent, Chevalier Sauvage! and you have scarcely an instant to lose! The queen believes this interval very differently employed by me!" said the Lady de Giac, kindly breaking the embarrassing pause.

"You have wasted many precious occasions formerly, Sir Owen—precious, at least to those who call themselves lovers!" said Madame Catherine, with some hesitation. "Pray you, speak—for this may well be the last!"

"What can I say, lady?" replied Owen. "I perceive, but too well, that your thoughts are empoisoned against me by slanderers! You believe me a faithless knight, to whom no faith is due!"

"Yes, messire; but not as you deem! The princess in nowise suspects you of returning her royal mother's tenderness!" said the Lady de Giac. "Whatever those slanderers may have wrought against you on other scores, I took care that on this the princess should not suspect your fidelity, even by the shadow of a doubt! I confessed to her your audacious scorn—the avowal accompanying it—which I was obliged to communicate to Madame Isabeau, to account for my own mistakes and your abrupt departure!"

"Nay, Sir Owen, I doubt your fidelity in nothing; my mother's wrath in much!" said the princess. "And it is because I believe in your absolute faith and devotion that I put it now to the ordeal! I would, messire, you should prove to me that your love is not the mere suggestion of ambition—the bubble of a mad astrologer's dream—as I have but too much reason to fear, since you trans-

ferred it so readily from this lady to ourself!—We take the regal style perchance too soon; but we speak our own words, in nothing prompted!"

"What ordeal, princess, will you give me to prove my love? If it be to take Henry of England by the beard, before all his court——!" exclaimed the Chevalier Sauvage.

"Peace, messire!—what mad presumption is this? Are you, in your turn, become the most audacious of Maillotins?" interrupted Madame Catherine. "Or can it be that you do seriously, and not in minstrel jesting, match your wild chieftaincy with the royal majesty of England? Yourself, you smile at the thought! Why, then, dear knight, remember how impossible it is that ever a daughter of France—much more a daughter of Isabeau de Bavière—can be to you but a distant star, whose cold light beams the colder for its brilliancy!—Was it not thus you spoke it, Lady de Giac?"

"I have least right of any to censure aspiring thoughts, madame!—that was Huéline de Troye—that am the Lady de Giac!" was the gentle reply.

"And this, I would add," said the princess, blushing slightly; the King of England is as noble a prince and knight as ever was Arthur of Britain!—I would have you serve him in his wars, and prove that your devotion to us is untainted by any baser affection, as did those ancient glories of love and chivalry to their queenly loves, Tristrem and Launcelot, whose legends you have so often sung to us, in that time—which I would I could all forget!"

"It is not difficult, lady, to forget when the splendours and triumphs of ambition surround us," said the wife of De Giac. "Until now, I deemed not the fitting time had arrived to confess so much—to confess all! But the Chevalier Sauvage can witness, that until the offered alliance of the potent De Giac lured me astray I was but too grateful to that love which, in not unmerited though unfelt revenge, he then transferred to your highness!"

"Is it even so?" said Madame Catherine. "We were, then, most falsely persuaded to believe that ours was the triumph of a real love over some mocking illusion of youth and fantasy, when it was but the inconstancy and pique of a too-fortunate and then slighted love! It is well, Sir Owen of Wales! You have made us an honourable successor; and we will make you one in turn! Come to us when we are the widow of the thrice royal and honest Henry—to demand that we should remember we were once mad enough to think it possible we could become your wife!"

"A widow!—the widow of Henry of England! Lady, you are not yet a wife!" exclaimed the hapless knight of Wales. "But that you were my first real love, and shall be my last, in all purity and faith—Heaven, and this fiendish woman, and

the shocks which the duke's pride had sustained, Taneguy joyfully announced that his jealousy was excited by the conduct of the Lady de Giac, and suspicions of her secret correspondence with the English prince, artfully fomented by De Giac. It was only necessary to gain time and work assiduously on these two main tacks, to determine the duke against the fatal negotiation in hand. Taneguy laughed heartily when he added that De Giac himself had undertaken to make his master jealous of his own wife with Henry of England! Such was the arrogance and rashness of John the Fearless that he had established almost a confidence with his minister on the subject of his attachment to the Lady de Giac. At all events, De Giac had discovered the art of insinuating his own suspicions and jealousies into his master, and might very reasonably affect every species of both in regard to his wife and a prince like Henry V. With the aid of these sentiments, and the opening he had so dexterously provided, De Giac thought it would be easy to protract the negotiations, and introduce in them points of concussion that would not fail to elicit angry sparks, and probably end in a general conflagration. Owen was enabled to render material assistance to these plans by his knowledge of the intentions of the queen and her favourite to conduct a secret ramification of intrigue with the English king. The use that was to be made of the princess in this warp of policy blinded him to every other consideration. The Lady de Giac would of course be the medium of the underhand plot; and it would not be difficult to persuade the duke, besides alarming him on political grounds, of the perils involved in points he more valued in such a confederation. These measures of counteraction were adopted with unhesitating craft and perseverance by the contrivers. The French propositions, invented by De Giac, contained within them the elements of innumerable discords. The endless discussions provoked wasted the time of the congress from day to day, and elicited more frequent displays of petulant humour from the duke, and of impatience and haughtiness from the youthful conqueror. Meanwhile Taneguy continued to urge his master's desire for a reconciliation, to increase the number of his concessions, the urgency of his entreaties and arguments. An undercurrent of suspicions and jealousy was kept in continual flow, for it was soon a matter placed beyond doubt that a secret commerce was carried on between the English quarters and those of the French sovereigns. The Lady de Giac's opposition to her husband's will on political points was as well known as her admiration for Henry V., and he made no secret to the duke that his wife was incessantly employed on messages and other correspondence with that prince. De Giac's complaints on this score were deepened in querulousness by suspicions of

another nature that exasperated Duke John, almost on the first hint, to excess. And the discovery of the suffering he inflicted by no means diminished De Giac's zeal in the task.

Among his numerous engagements of the kind, no one before the brilliant minstreless had ever inspired Duke John with a lasting and passionate attachment. His fears and anger were increased by reasons of which De Giac himself was kept in ignorance. It might be that she who had been Huéline de Troye yielded to feelings of disgust and indignation, now that the object for which it was necessary to obtain influence was seemingly accomplished, and desired to discard her boisterous lover. Or—as she replied to all entreaties—his gross allusions to their amity in the conference at Meulan had excited the suspicions of De Giac and her own resentment so much, that it was necessary it should cease for ever! The Lady de Giac's obstinate persistence in this course of conduct, and the fears infused by her husband's crafty complaints, rapidly produced their effect. The duke's ill humour and haughtiness irritated Henry, and, in conjunction with the protracted residence of the Armagnac envoy, Duchâtel, made him imagine that some secret intrigue was at work. Unluckily, the confidence placed by the queen and her intended son-in-law in their means of intelligence deceived them. The Lady de Giac was no longer cognisant of the progress of the Armagnac intrigues. The impatience of Henry hurried the duke's irresolution. He admitted Taneguy, in whose rough and straightforward character he seemed to place great confidence, to frequent audiences. Guided by De Giac, this zealous envoy confessed that the Dauphin was so terrified at the prospect of the alliance with Henry, that he would grant the duke any terms. He argued the various articles of the reconciliation with the earnestness of a man who intends to abide by the letter of his agreement. The duke was rather pleased than angered by this loyal resistance; and when he at length dictated articles which would have put the realm of France, and the dauphin himself, into his tutelage, the energetic remonstrances of Taneguy induced him to cling to them with more pertinacity, as an assurance of security in their provisions. Finally—as if reduced to despair—Taneguy consented to the largest demands of the duke, requesting only that in return he would immediately break up the conferences, proclaim war with Henry, and meet the Dauphin in a personal interview. To this last condition Duke John would by no means assent. In vain did Taneguy allege that it was absolutely necessary to satisfy all France of the cordiality of the reconciliation, to concert measures with certainty, to remove any personal dislike which so long a course of mutual opposition might have engendered. For once, Taneguy became a court-

and declared, for the first time, that the duke had only to appear to dispel the most inveterate rancour—as he found by his own experience! The duke smiled, but on this point was inflexible.

At first he alleged motives not unlikely to sway his haughty nature, and protested that he would never submit to humble himself so far as to seek the presence of a prince who considered him as an usurper, and himself as his lord! Taneguy removed this pretended objection by promising that his dauphin should advance more than half way to meet the duke, and should receive him in all respects as his equal. The captious Burgundian then insisted that such would be an assertion of independence which future legists might fasten upon to bar the rights of his posterity to the vast fiefs held by his house of the crown of France. Forebodings of a kind that rarely disturbed the purposes of John the Fearless visited him. He confessed to De Giac that the latter's wife had informed him that, if ever he trusted himself into the power of the Armagnacs, he would be destroyed by them! "There needs no sorceress, nor magic questionings, to tell us that!" said De Giac. "But who ever thought of putting your royal person into the power of your enemies? The Armagnacs offer us every security we can devise: the place of the conference shall be in our possession: every oath that can bind men shall be sworn; and, better than all, you shall be guarded by as many tried spears as the dauphin can bring of his boyish levies, with him! And let me remind your grace that I stood before the whole Armagnac council with a drop of kindred blood upon me from every heart that beat among them—and I am here at this day to advise your trust in them!"

Duke John was shaken, but not convinced; and it was found necessary to move a still more powerful engine against him. De Giac received, or purposely drew on himself, some marks of contempt and dislike from the King of England, and alleged it as a reason to withdraw from discussions in which his opinion was held of no weight. He declared that he was weary of vexing his fair wife by resistance to her favourite policies, and that he would accordingly retire to some of his castles until she had completed them in favour of Henry of England, and could be released from her incessant attendance on the queen-regent! This fired the train, and John the Fearless, yielding to his natural disposition, declared that he would immediately break up the conferences, conclude the alliance with the dauphin, and grant him the required interview, on condition that De Giac would be as usual of his retinue, and compel his intriguing and perilous wife to be of the party! De Giac eagerly assented to these stipulations. He produced a paper which the English monarch had caused to be handed in, renewing his first demand that his

preliminaries should be assented to before anything was farther discussed. De Giac advised that an immediate reply should be made, peremptorily refusing these conditions as in the highest degree exorbitant and unreasonable. It was not difficult to perceive the result of this reply with a prince so haughty as Henry V. In measures of violence, Duke John always surpassed the expectations of his prompters. He concluded a treaty with Taneguy, and on the same day broke up the conferences of Meulan with a violence and suddenness that amazed nearly all its participants. Not satisfied with refusing Henry's demands, he insisted that the offers of France should be accepted without cavil or explanation; and, if not, he declared that he withdrew them altogether, and was prepared to abide the chance of war! Henry yielded to his long-suppressed indignation, and accepted the alternative. This blow was followed up by the abrupt removal of the queen and her daughter to Paris. No time was allowed her to concert any contrary plans with her intended son-in-law, who withdrew in high wrath to his old quarters on the frontiers of Normandy. Moreover, her means of communication were restricted, the Lady de Giac receiving peremptory commands not to leave Pontoise unless to accompany her husband in the duke's retinue. It was then announced that the duke intended to visit his provinces of Burgundy, to levy all possible aid against the English. De Giac obtained from him, as a condition essential to his comfort and safety, that he would not announce his purpose to any one, until a public reconciliation with the dauphin convinced both factions that it was useless to attempt thwarting the project.

The Lady de Giac was in such evident disfavour that there was no occasion to warn the duke against confiding in her. But the suddenness of the event, and the precautions adopted, seemed to astound her into submission. She yielded, as it appeared, with a kind of exhaustion to the changed flow of the tide of destiny! Vengeance was in a manner satisfied; that profound and metaphysical vengeance, at least, which her nature could covet. The game had lost its interest to her when her antagonist seemed so utterly checkmated that he retired from the contest. From the hour of his interview with Madame Catherine, Owen Tudor disappeared, no one knew whither, from the courts assembled at Meulan. Moreover, the Lady de Giac was deprived of the most powerful engines of her intrigues. After the revelation that had been made, the princess no longer looked upon her with friendly eyes; Isabeau de Bavière was disgusted with the final ill success of her exertions, that deprived her even of the opportunity of vengeance! The Lady de Giac's coldness, and coquetry with Henry of England, had seemingly de-

her of all influence with the Duke of Burgundy. But when the breaking-up of the conferences, and the abrupt departure of Tanegay Duchâtel, announced the failure of her most elaborate and heavy triumphant combinations, De Giac dreaded what might follow. He therefore took his measures with such rapidity and decision that he left his wife scarcely a chance of [illegible] him. By a jealous watchfulness, and taking care to prevent her from suspecting the imminence of the peril, he hoped to achieve this object. It was therefore, chiefly, that he prevailed upon his royal master to keep his purpose of meeting with the dauphin a profound secret: and he smiled to perceive how his wife, in her disdain and unconsciousness, continued wrapped in a melancholy silence and reserve which the duke's jealousy interpreted into anger at being snatched from her magnificent conquest, and that deprived her of the means to baffle him. In this manner the Duke of Burgundy journeyed southward, ostensibly on the route to his provinces of Burgundy; and in the afternoon of a memorable day, being Sunday, the 10th of September, approached the town of Montereau-faut-Yonne. Duke John travelled, according to the manner of the great nobility of the age, on horseback, with a magnificent court and retinue of armed men. The principal of his nobles and councillors accompanied him, among whom De Giac was now the foremost. Within about a mile of Montereau, a knight and two esquires, known by their colours to be Burgundians, came dashing along the road at a rapid pace. De Giac perceived them, and rode forward to meet them, as if in expectation of some tidings referable to his office of master of the household. It suddenly pleased the Lady de Giac to keep company with her lord, and to ride forward with him—perhaps to escape the opportunity of speech and explanation which his absence afforded the duke. In his eagerness, De Giac did not notice this accompaniment: and, after listening to the news which the knight communicated, he was about to dismiss him with a contemptuous reproof of the folly of an alarm he brought, when the Lady de Giac interposed. "Tarry, sirs, I command you!" she said, in a tone which few knew how to disobey. "The duke shall hear what you have said! Come with me; he is here!—Ah, most noble prince and lord! can it be true that you have come to this town to meet the dauphin and the Armagnacs face to face?"

It was the first time for several weeks that the Lady de Giac had spoken to Duke John, and he replied with asperity. "You are something late to ask us, lady; but it is true! Who has told you, now, when you at last deign to inquire?"

"If it be so, look up and behold your latest sun, John of Burgundy!—and look, all of ye, at your master's grave, and perchance [illegible]wn!—It is yonder; it is Montereau!" exclaimed the once

minstreless. "Gracious duke! when have I prophesied falsely? —And hearken to these men!"

"What is the matter? what hath chanced?" said the duke, much startled.

"Sir, it is only my lady's last effort to save her favourite, the English king!" said De Giac.

"Hear Sir Anthony de Toulongeon!—what say you, sir, of these new barriers, of vantages seized by the dauphinists?" said the Lady de Giac, with wild impetuosity.

"Nay, lady, we but noticed, on the bridge over the Seine, where the conferences were to be held,"——began the knight from Montereau—

"The erection of certain new barriers—for which I myself stipulated!" interrupted De Giac.

"These knights say they are greatly to the advantage of the dauphin's party!" rejoined his wife.

"Truly, the fear is altogether on their side; we hold the castle, and they have no protection but their barriers from an onset!" said De Giac. "Still, as your grace pleases; it is not yet too late to turn tail, and cower at Henry of England's feet!"

"Go you to battle with the dauphin, sir?—for as yet I clearly understand nothing!" said the Lady de Giac, now thoroughly roused and alarmed.

"Are you a prophetess, wife, and know not?" returned De Giac.

"I prophesy less by the stars than by my knowledge of the baseness and cruelty of men!" said his angry consort, with a terrible glance that seemed almost to probe to the core of De Giac's mystery.

"Come, sirs, around me, and I will tell you all at the same time with this false prophetess wherefore I am here!" said the duke, collecting with his gestures a species of council of his principal nobles about him. "I am utterly aweary of the insolence and domination of our ancient English enemies—and it is only by the union of all France that we can repel the invaders from our fruitful inheritance! We have had enough of vengeance; were we tigers, we are glutted with blood! The dauphin consents to terms that shall put it into my power to reward your loves more amply than ever I have yet done, and more lastingly! Therefore am I come to this town of Montereau, whose castle and strength are in my hands, to swear perpetual peace and brotherhood with Sir Charles, that we may brighten the sword of France in concert that hath too long lain tarnished in the scabbard, and sharpen it for England's breast! We will make him better pleased to leave France than he threatened he would make us!—And, lady, if you are grieved too much at that can cross the sea on his crupper!"

This speech produced a great effect upon the Burgundian chivalry, most of whom cordially rejoiced in the prospect of retaining what they had acquired with so much difficulty, by a more legal sanction than they were conscious their duke possessed. But some were disturbed at the earnest dissuasions of the Lady de Giac, and with the tidings brought by Sir Anthony de Toulongeon. De Giac removed these objections by pointing out the precautions he had adopted, the desperation of the dauphin's affairs, the utter ruin which he would bring on himself by pulling down the only powerful barrier existing between Henry of England and the throne of France. "Can it be thought," he said, "that a prince of the royal blood of France—the son and successor of the realm—could harbour disloyal thoughts against one of his nearest kindred, who comes to him extending the hand of fellowship and brotherhood?"

"Let the duke himself answer! Had he not sworn on a piece of the true cross with Orleans, the brother and the son of a king!" returned the Lady de Giac.

"But the dauphin has no De Giac at his elbow to counsel him and laugh at such shackles!" said the duke. "He is guided by the bold and loyal Taneguy Duchâtel, who knows not how to strike beneath the armour!"

"And Sir Owen Tudor, whose noble honour even our suspicious lady cannot doubt," said De Giac. "But if your grace feels no longer heart for this enterprise, if a woman's fears affright you, too,—we can easily return to Pontoise! What matter who laughs? Henry of England will make us greatly welcome, and, when two such royalties meet and mingle, pleasures and dalliance will abound to content even our lady's love of splendour and variety!"

"Let us on!" said the duke, with a dark flush. "We will never suffer our courage to be doubted, and the Parisians shall not say, as we know well they do, that all the miseries and shame of France are due to our halting between two bundles, and not daring to eat hay for nettles! We will on, and await whatever chance it shall please God to send us!"

With these words, John the Fearless put his steed in motion, and the whole retinue followed, the Lady de Giac among the rest, with a sigh of despairing submission.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BLOOD FOR BLOOD.

There seemed, indeed, to be no reason for the fears of the minstreless, and they might well be considered as effusions of appointment at the overthrow of her combinations. The castle of Montereau was assigned to the duke for his

lodgings, and it commanded the passage of the Seine, on the opposite bank of which the dauphin and his troops were encamped. The conference was to take place on the middle of a bridge, the only access between the two shores of the river. Each party had secured its own side by strong barricades, so as to prohibit the passage equally to both. On the near approach, the castle gates admitted from the open country; on the farther, its massive walls and battlements overlooked and defended the bridge. De Giac pointed out the strength of the fortress, as they advanced, to the duke and his warlike courtiers. But, although the former took much comfort from the consideration, he was evidently but ill at ease. His inquiet glance continually sought out the Lady de Giac, who preserved a profound and melancholy silence. In this manner they rode to the castle, and the duke alighted at its ponderous portals with his chief lords and attendants. James de la Barne, master of the cross-bows, and Sir Charles de Lens, admiral of France, then busied themselves in selecting and posting the duke's guard, while he entered the castle to partake of some refreshment. De Giac took care not to leave the duke for a single instant, endeavouring by incessant discourse to keep his mind engaged. But all would not do: a deep foreboding gloom hung over the duke's spirits. In vain did he swallow many deep quaffs of his favourite wine of Lorraine. It only gave him resolution to prefer a request to his minister which was certainly very unseasonable. He confessed that he was troubled in mind, and desired him to bring the Lady de Giac to his presence, that he might question her for a few minutes, alone, whether she had any other reasons than her foolish pretensions to fortunetelling in advising him to refrain from this interview. Until this instant De Giac perhaps felt an occasional relenting of purpose; for, with all his exasperation and wrongs, community of thought and deeds had greatly attached him to the duke. But this audacious and scarcely veiled affront filled the measure over. Still he feared to stir suspicion or hesitation by a refusal.

"I will bring her—my wife!" he said, with perfect calmness, "provided your grace will promise that, if she alleges no other reason but her fears for your safety, you will conclude it is her anxiety for that of the all-victorious King of England!"

"I will—doubt it not!" replied the irascible duke; and De Giac left his presence on the mission.

He expected some feigned reluctance and surprise in his wife; but she betrayed none whatever. On the contrary, she eagerly complied with the summons, without demur or observation. De Giac escorted her to the duke's apartment; and, not satisfied with this complaisance, he smilingly declared that he would leave field clear for her arguments, and retired.

"He is gone!" said the duke, who watched his faithful minister to the extremity of a long gallery into which the chamber opened. And then, turning with a sullen and angry look, he continued, "But deem not, false sorceress, I have desired your presence that I might yield again to your spells, and make myself the jest of all royalty and chivalry!"

"My lord has told me wherefore you desired my presence, gracious prince," replied the Lady de Giac. "You wish to know if I have any reason, beyond my witchlore, to suspect ruin and death to you in this interview!—I answer, yea; my very presence here, by his means, if none other, is an assurance that your death-decree is signed!"

"Tut, tut, he suspects nothing, or, if he doth, cares nothing," replied the duke, but with some alarm.

"Superficial man, all duke as thou art!" said Huéline de Troye, with extreme bitterness, "know then from me, and with absolute certainty, that De Giac suspects, knows thy guilty tenderness for me—and as certainly cherishes the hope and purpose of vengeance!"

"I care not—let him know!—I am the lion, and who shall dispute my prey with me?" said the duke, with kindling eyes. "Certes, not the vassal whom I have raised from the dust, and can dash down again at pleasure!—But, since thou augurest so ill of my expedition and present purpose, dearest Huéline, thou canst not deny forgiveness to a dying man—and one sweet farewell kiss!"

"Thou speakest mockingly, but truly, John of Burgundy!" said the Lady de Giac, sorrowfully, and yet scornfully, gazing at his incredulous smile. "No, the cold lips of death would chill my heart, already too cold! There were no sweetness in such a parting! Go, since thou wilt, to destruction! but ask another pardon! Though thy gross words and vaunts seared my soul, what forgiveness shouldst thou ask that goest to slaughter with the blood of a murdered kinsman on thy head?"

"It is true!" replied the duke, gloomily rolling his eyes. "And never until this hour did the blood of Orleans sit so heavily on my soul! He died young, amid his pleasures!—I should have had prayers said for his soul, and would, but that men might have said, I repented me! It shall be done as soon as possible after this happy peace and reconciliation!"

"Not by thee, then, John of Burgundy," replied Lady de Giac.

"But hast thou no other reason, save thy fears of De Giac's jealousy?—Why should a vassal, of worthless name, be jealous?" said the duke, musingly.

"Why should a vassal, of worthless name, occasion jealousy? Have I not made my father's so?" replied Huéline de Troye.

"Yea, I am jealous—bitterly jealous of thee!" exclaimed the duke, vehemently. "Was it not enough that the old man vexed my soul, but thou must torture me with the insolent English boy?"

"A strange boy that conquers men!" replied the Lady de Giac. "But you are right!—Believe me, Duke John, whenever your star encounters that of Henry of England, it must pale!"

"I go to assay that prophecy!" replied the duke. "Come what may, I am resolved either to perish or to prove to you that your minion is not the God you deem him!—to separate ye for ever!"

"Alack, alack! let me not destroy thee too!" said the lady, with a mixture of compassion and horror in her tones. "I have done mischief enow—destroyed too many that have loved me! Wilt thou believe me, John, when I swear to thee, that not for all the realms that Henry of England claims or covets, would I that any but Catherine of France should win his favour!"

"And wherefore so?—What is Catherine of France to thee?" said the duke, incredulously.

"She is the star, the beloved, of Owen Tudor! He betrayed my love—I would avenge the wrong!" she replied, with wild velocity. "I have confessed my shame!—Wilt thou believe me now?"

"Is it even so?" said the duke, with a wrathful expression. "I wronged not De Giac, then, so much as I deemed—and it is well! But leave thy vengeance to me! If ever I return alive from the bridge of Montereau—and I will go if it be but to obtain his carcass, as a fugitive prisoner's, from the dauphin!—His ransom was never paid!—Meanwhile, if it be true that I am slipping into the grave, I will clutch the vine-leaves and grapes in with me! We will not part foes, my sweet one! and we will meet again such friends as we were wont to be when John of Burgundy first throned thee in his heart his lady and love!"

The minstreless was moved, and renewed her supplications while yielding to the duke's passionate embrace, with so much earnestness that neither of them noticed the return of De Giac, accompanied by a stranger knight, until they were in the apartment! Starting apart, the duke and his fatal mistress looked with betraying confusion at the arrivants. The imperturbable De Giac, however, took no notice of the circumstance.

"I have brought you a willing hostage, sir," he observed. "Sir Owen Tudor, on the mere hint of your doubts, most cheerfully offers his own person in pledge for your safety! Methinks my lady wife values it as much as your faithfullest councillor; and we will leave this knight her prisoner till your return!"

"It shall be so!" said the duke, cheering up rapidly. "Lady, we confide this hostage to your keeping, and with it this key of the turret above, which contains our choicest treasure and the great casket of our jewels! We shall not be long gone;

wilt thou not be the first to welcome us back, our bright lady?—for we will not scruple to acknowledge before all the world how dearly we hold thee!"

The duke's eye fell upon De Giac with a mistrust and scrutiny in its expression which yet provoked no signs in him whence suspicions might be gathered.

"All the world is already aware of your highness's generosity and condescension to our poor house!" he replied. "But the honest knight, Sir Taneguy, is fuming below that your grace should keep his dauphin waiting like a vassal for his lord!"

"I come!" said the duke, continuing in a laughing manner. "And since I leave this knight and lady together, henceforth, old comrade, methinks *thou* needst not be jealous of them!"

"And yet I could be well content, my redoubted lord, to catch a glimpse of them, from time to time, during our conference!" said De Giac, in a similarly light tone. "And, since my lady wife is so anxious regarding your highness's safety, she can watch every step and every gesture that passes from the treasure-chamber above, of which she has the key!"

"I am ready, then," said the duke. "Let none follow but those who have special order; and do thou obey thy lord's commands, Huéline,—though it be for the last time!"

"And the first!" said De Giac, laughing wildly.

"Go not, go not, dearest prince!—dost thou hear his laugh?" exclaimed the lady. "Oh, there is murder in that mirth!"

"Art thou mad, wife? Doth the downfall of the English tyrant trouble thee so much?" said De Giac. "Remember all thine own arguments on the lawfulness of the destruction of tyrants, when thou didst plead to the commonalty of Paris!—They bear fruit now!"

"And dost thou remember, lady, how Perrinet told the gaping mob of the Turkish astrologer's prediction on me?" said the duke, smiling. "Comfort thee! I have not yet done Christendom so much harm, as an angry follower of Mahound might; and therefore my time is not come!"

"The deaths of great men do oft as great mischief as their lives!—Cæsar's enslaved the world which his blood was to redeem!" returned Huéline de Troye.

"Here is Sir Taneguy—vexed that you keep his master lackeying a woman's fears!" exclaimed De Giac, as the Breton knight made his way into the chamber with the nobles who were appointed to a personal attendance on the duke.

"My lord, you treat him worse than the haughty Englishman, with Agincourt nodding on his helm, treated you!" said Taneguy Duchâtel. "And what women's fears can trouble John the Fearless?"

"It is true! that is my name!" said the duke, proudly. "Welcome, Sir Taneguy, you are the man in whom I trust!—Let us hasten to make our apologies to the dauphin; but set a sufficient guard, De Giac, on this hostage!"

"I will not fail, my lord; Philip Josquin shall have the charge," replied De Giac.

"What hostage?" inquired Sir Taneguy. "Hush, it must be!—it is Sir Owen Tudor!" replied De Giac in a low tone; and, after what was possibly a severe inward struggle, Taneguy muttered to himself, "Yes, it must be!—and so he has them both, and his vengeance is complete!"

"Cheer thee, sweet Lady de Giac, and bid us good speed!" continued the duke, tenderly. "We must deserve the name wherefore women love us—for else, indeed, we should fear to leave our dame with so pretty a boy as this of Wales!"

"For the last time, I beseech thee, go not to this fatal meeting, John of Burgundy!—Go not, my lord, thus blindfold to destruction!" said the Lady de Giac.

"I remain as your pledge, my lord; and else France is lost, and all is Henry of Monmouth's!" exclaimed the Chevalier Sauvage; and the earnestness of his youthful face decided the Duke of Burgundy.

"We cannot suspect an invitation that has such a messenger; but yet we are not the less bounden for our lady's love and care!" he said; and, pressing the lady's hand to his lips, he murmured some words which the jealous ears of De Giac could not catch, and gave the signal of departure to his retinue.

The Lady de Giac and the Chevalier Sauvage were left alone with Philip Josquin, the duke's armourer and most trusty man-at-arms. For some instants neither uttered a word. Owen seemed afraid that a word might recal the duke, and once more baffle him! It was not till the latter was completely out of hearing that he turned to the Lady de Giac, and, with a face glowing with fierce triumph, exclaimed, "Witness, lady! the game was not all lost at Meulan!"

"Let us go and see!—who knows?" replied the Lady de Giac, with a troubled glance. "Thou art honest, mayhap, but what are they that employ thee?—Let us ascend the turret."

Owen followed the lady as she opened a door in the apartment which gave access by a flight of stone stairs to a small tower that flanked the gateway of the castle towards the town of Montereau. Some chests, containing part of the duke's most valuable treasures, lay in a round chamber in which they landed, and that opened by a narrow doorway on a projecting battlement. Thither the Lady de Giac and the hostage made their way, and for some moments both gazed with intense anxiety over the preparations below

A powerful body of the duke's soldiery guarded the castle-gate immediately beneath their observation, and extended their lines as far as the first barrier on the bridge. The extent of the duke's division was marked by the waving of his banner; and the royal standard of France showed where the dauphin and his nobles were expecting the arrival of their visitant. The dauphin was sufficiently distinguishable, being distant a short arrow-flight. He was clad in complete armour, and was leaning either wearily or thoughtfully on one of his nearest barriers. It was drawing towards evening, but the huts of a large encampment, in which the dauphin and his retinue lodged, were distinctly seen on the opposite shore of the river. While the knight and lady gazed from their elevation over this spectacle, the castle-gates swung open, and the duke, attended by ten of his principal nobles, made his appearance on the platform leading to the bridge. Sir Pierre de Giac was of the number, and it seemed as if he addressed some observation to the duke that induced him to look up at the tower. He recognised the gazing pair on the battlements, and kissed his hand with the utmost tenderness and gallantry to the Lady de Giac.

"What should you fear, lady? Methinks your husband is most courteous and kindly!" said Owen, with a satirical bitterness and exultation he could not repress.

"Say that when the duke returns, and I will believe!" replied the lady.

"You love this duke—and love is timorous!" retorted Owen.

"'Tis false!—I never loved but one!" said the Lady de Giac, with sudden vehemence. "I loved—but it was neither duke nor count. It was a poor fugitive of England—a prisoner in mortal jeopardy!"

"Do not vaunt the service you then rendered me, lady. You preserved me, but not to my good," returned Owen.

"Nor to mine own!" said Huéline, with flashing eyes. "What am I now?—certes, not what I was born to be!—In my young years I dreamed a noble dream; and, but for thee, my land might have boasted among its earliest minstrels its truest one! —Genius, passion, the thirst for glory, the universal benevolence that overflowed my heart, as light the sun—where are they all now? What terrible past stretches behind—what hopeless future beyond? Nor love, nor hate, nor hope, nor even fear, remain to me! I look to the heavens themselves, with all this burden of guilt upon my brow—and ah! woful daughter of Jean de Troye, what seest thou there? Not even an avenging destiny! —nothing but the blue and passionless vault that for so many thousand ages has overlooked the wrongs and sufferings of men, unmoved!"

"Am I not desolate too?" said Owen, affected by the deep despair of the tones of this lamentation.

"I trust thou art! Nought but that certainty remains to console me," replied Huéline. "Betray, abandon, as thou wilt—never more canst thou be happy wholly! I have fastened a spell to thy heart which shall irk there for ever—silently it may be—but ceaselessly as the worm in the core!"

"Thou hast, indeed!—Incredible wrong hast thou wrought me; but thou hast not triumphed over destiny!" returned the Welsh knight.

"I wronged thee not, to disabuse thee of thy madness!" she replied. "The wrong was thine, that didst prefer the gewgaws of man's jewellery to the sterling wealth of nature—the royalty of Catherine of France to the heart of Huéline de Troye! I tell thee, Owen, had she been worthy of thee—had I not found in her the shallow inconstancy thou hast proved—never would I have laboured at thy sorrowful disenchantment! It was a madness to behold for what I was preferred! But now thou too? What is Catherine of France now, even in thine eyes?"

"And what is the Lady de Giac in her own? Look, your duke has reached the first barrier!" returned Owen Tudor.

"Ay, what, indeed?" said the minstreless, and a shadowy crimson stole over her face. "I will not think what I am—and let thy heart remember what I was! When I first beheld thee, Owen, passion filled my soul; but it was pure as the fierce light of India in the white cup of the lotos! And now—even now—were there any word in language that could speak the mere essence of things, as lightning utters the tempest—all thought, emotion, suffering, wreaking themselves in frenzy—that word would restore me to vestal purity even in thine eyes! Thou smilest—and it is well! There is a universal bar between us now, 'tis true!—we speak the tongues of two strange lands—though but one! Never yet has man understood his hapless partner! What, indeed, if your sugared words be truth—what if we are the angels ye call us—fallen angels!—compelled, in expiation of our sins, to be the disgusted slaves of your soulless materiality awhile here below?"

"You are aweary of your duke; but you will not soon behold your king again!" said Owen. "Look, John is surrounded by the loving greetings of the dauphin's nobles! A few more steps, and all France will embrace in the arms of those princes!—then woe to your Henry, were he thrice of Agincourt!"

"Ay, he is closely hemmed in; and doubtless they renew their promises and pledges! But what do those who lock the barriers behind him?" said the lady, bending anxiously over the battlement.

"It is the Lord de Giac who fastens it; doubtless to preve-

any sequence that might cause confusion!" said Owen, but with considerable agitation. "Look! Sir Taneguy walks beside him, the mirror of French faith and loyalty! They exchange kindly words, for, see, Sir Taneguy's white teeth gleam as he laughs in his helmet!"

"But the dauphin is immovable behind his barrier! Methought they were to meet in the middle of the bridge and embrace!" said the lady.

"Some respect his greatness must observe," replied Owen, with anxiety. "He will embrace the duke when he kneels in homage. And look, 'tis now!"

"The dauphin passes not his barrier, and, by his gestures, methinks he is rather addressing reproaches than kindly words!" said the lady. "The duke bends his head as one that is overwhelmed with surprise, and strives to soothe by humility!"

"It is nothing; I heard it concerted that Sir Robert de Loire was to raise the duke, with this compliment, 'Rise, my lord, you are too great a man to kneel,' and that was to be the signal," said Owen.

"Of what?—for, see, some massive knight takes him by the arm!" exclaimed the Lady de Giac.

"The signal for the embrace of perpetual union and amity!—and now, false Huéline, thou art baffled!" said Owen. And, as he spoke, it seemed as if the duke, on hearing some words uttered by the powerful knight beside him, made an attempt to rise. It is well averred, that either his sword accidentally turned in his belt, so as to embarrass his movements, or else it was purposely tangled in his surcoat by some one of the conspirators behind. At all events, the duke naturally attempted, by putting his hand on the hilt, to set the weapon in its proper position. It was at this instant that the ominous words pealed to the ears of Owen Tudor and of the Lady de Giac, as they stretched breathlessly over the battlements, from the lips of Sir Robert de Loire, "Ha! false duke, would you draw your sword on my lord the dauphin?"

"Now is the time!" returned the terrific tones of Taneguy Duchâtel; and, raising a small battle-axe which he held in his hand, he smote the duke a blow that might have felled an ox, but in part failed, through the very violence and fury of the stroke, though it clove off a part of the victim's chin, and smote him down again on both his knees with the shock. John the Fearless uttered a yell, such as, at a later period, burst from the similarly-mangled jaws of Robespierre; yet, with the courage that mingled so largely amid all his evil qualities, he again essayed to draw his weapon, and made a powerful effort to rise and defend himself. But the sword was snatched from its sheath by De Giac, and, almost simultaneously, the unhappy prince fell covered with gore

and wounds to the earth! Even thus fallen, his enemies threw themselves upon him like hounds on a spent deer, tore off pieces of his armour, and mangled him in every possible manner. Two of them raised his haubergeon, and stabbed him repeatedly below the girdle, until their hands and daggers were covered with blood. Some of the accompanying nobles attempted to defend their master, or themselves, by drawing their swords. The Lord de Nouaille closed and wrestled with the Viscount de Narbonne, one of the eagerest of the murderers; but he, too, fell by a back stroke that scattered his brains over the scene of horror. Another of the Burgundian lords had his arm cloven; and the rest were overpowered by numbers and made prisoners, with scarcely any resistance.

This terrible tragedy was but the work of a minute; and its completion was announced to the horrified gazers in the turret by De Giac, who, contemptuously kicking the duke's carcass over in its crimson pool, perhaps to be satisfied that he was dead, turned and kissed his hand, in horrible mockery of the victim's last gesture of love and homage to the fatal daughter of Jean de Troye!

Owen continued gazing at the spectacle, unable to give the slightest utterance, or to move, like a sufferer under some hideous nightmare! When at length he forced out some articulate sounds, he himself was amazed to hear that a cry, which he meant should shake the very heavens, came faintly as the whisper of death from his lips! "To arms!—rescue!—treason!" his own sense scarcely distinguished the words; but the effort broke the spell of horror; and, bending over the battlements, he renewed the summons in frantic shrieks that resounded to the lowest dungeon of the castle! The men-at-arms on guard at the gate below instantly pushed tumultuously forward towards the barriers, yelling, "Murder!—rescue!—murder!" But they were met by a powerful body of the dauphin's knights, headed by Taneguy Duchâtel, and a furious conflict commenced. Owen Tudor drew himself back with difficulty from his pendent position over the battlements, and, shouting distractedly "Rescue, rescue!" attempted to leave the turret.

"Stay, stay!—where go you? You will be massacred, knight! The Burgundians will not doubt you are of the conspiracy. Do not, by perishing on their swords, leave it an eternal belief!" shrieked the Lady de Giac; and, even in that awful moment, fear of this lasting infamy acted like a spell on the son of Arthur. "What is he to thee, Owen, that thou shouldst perish with the murderous Duke of Burgundy? Remember the massacre of the Armagnacs—the blood of Orleans! Let them destroy each other, these royal wolves of France! Look here; th—

didst deem I loved him! Lo, then, within sight of his weltering carcass, I tell thee that I love thee—thee only! Never shall my assassin husband be aught to me but an executioner or a victim! Save me from that most hideous gulf of all! and since all is lost with thee, too—for this deed gives France to England, and already the princess has plighted herself, heart and hand, to Henry V.—fly with me! Once more at thy feet, I implore thee, be mine—fly with me! Let us range the free earth together!—those fatal stars of thine our only roof, the desert our dwelling-place, if thou wilt! I ask but leave to be thy slave, thy worshipper! Or, if thy land be still dear to thee, let us fly thither! Let us scatter fire among your mountains, and kindle the flame of liberty on them, for all the earth—as of old the brightness shone on Sinai! Look, what heaps of treasure are around us; let us take it and fly, and accomplish your glorious oracles nobly, and not by meanly sneaking to a royal couch! I tell thee, by all the rules of science, Glendower prophesied aright; but thine horoscope, doubt it not, is to be accomplished by the sword, and not by the ring! I have a soul worthy to mate with a kingly victor's! Henry of England is thine enemy! Either we will make thy land free, or perish by some grand and noble death that shall console our dispossessed spirits through all the centuries of doom!"

"Away, horrible woman! My father's grave would yawn on Snowdon beneath thine accursed feet!" shouted Owen. "I will war no longer with the Saxon! Be for ever the scourge of this treacherous land; let thy merciless sword avenge humanity incessantly on this ruthless race, England!—and I, that hate thee most, will aid thee best!"

"Go, then, and become the vassal of the oppressor—the slave of a royal coquette who loves merely her own reflection in the hearts of men!" said Huéline de Troye. "Go, then! thou art worthy of thy mean destiny! For me, I will dash into the wildest rush of fate; I will know the utmost that humanity can enjoy and suffer, and then——!" She paused with a terrific smile, and looked upward with a mad defiance that might have belonged to the great archangel when first he gazed to the skies after his fall.

"Quit my path; I will perish, if it must be!" were Owen's words, after a moment of unutterable horror. The sounds of conflict thickened all around.

"Nay, *not again!*" said Huéline, stepping aside from his threatening gesture. He sprang past her, and attempted to make his way to the lower apartments of the castle, whence the sounds of battle now distinctly came. But the faithful Philip Josquin, though he had betaken himself to flight, had secured

the hostage by closing and bolting the massive stone door of the turret. And thus was Owen compelled to remain alone with the fatal minstreless, an inactive auditor of the conflict raging below, until it terminated in favour of the assailants. The greater part of the duke's array fled in panic as soon as tidings of his destruction reached their ears, and his nobles and knights only defended themselves until they obtained good terms of surrender.

The castle of Montereau was not many minutes in the hands of the Armagnacs ere Taneguy Duchâtel, accompanied by the Lord de la Trimouille, made their way to the chamber where the hostage was confined.

"All is well!" exclaimed Taneguy as he entered the turret with his bloody axe still in his hand. "The duke's treasure and mine are both safe! Chevalier Sauvage, pardon me: it was no trick of mine, but of this lady's husband, that put your life in such jeopardy; for, until I perceived that he had plotted your destruction too, I believed what he oft told me, that you were too squeamish of what you call your faith and honour to be trusted! As if faith or honour were due to the murderer of Orleans!"

"Lead me to your dauphin: to him only will I speak my heart!" returned Owen.

"And, transcendent Lady de Giac, deign to accept my hand to lead you to the same most royal protection!" said the Lord de la Trimouille. "Your husband, Sir Pierre, is in so bitter a mood, that I craved my lord the dauphin's leave to be your guardian until he smoothens his ruffled plumes!"

"You have my consent, Messire de la Trimouille!" said Owen Tudor.

"Ah, I have not forgotten our compact! Sweet Lady de Giac, have you?" said the gallant favourite.

"I forget nothing—nor ever shall!" replied Huéline de Troye; and, slowly resigning her hand to La Trimouille's eager grasp, she gave one long lingering look at Owen, and suffered the Armagnac courtier to lead her from the scene.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

L'ENVOY.

It was several months after these tragical events, on the day of the Feast of the Nativity, which was celebrated with extraordinary pomp in Paris. Three magnificent courts kept it in common, as a token of their affectionate and perfect amity. Henry, King of England, now proclaimed Regent and Heir of France, with his most lovely and youthful queen, Madame Catherine; Charles, King of France, with his imperious consort, Isa-

beau de Bavière; Philip, Duke of Burgundy, successor and avenger of John the Fearless, with his duchess—were returning in united procession through a series of the most superb and complimentary spectacles which the genius of Roman de la Rose could contrive, from making their offering at Notre Dame, to a stupendous banquet given by the English monarch in the Castle of the Louvre. The butchers of Paris were more determined Burgundians than ever. The tragical death of Duke John had restored him to the affection of the multitude. They had dressed out a most magnificent ox, in all the colours of the rainbow, as a present to their new king for his Christmas feast, as he passed the Boucherie. The Master-Chief's daughter was to present it with some pretty verses, adroitly turned for the occasion by Roman de la Rose, thanking King Henry for confirming the succession to her husband, Rhys ap Goronwy—breaking thus the Salic law of the Boucherie too. The said husband was there in person, looking the very picture of honest happiness; and Simon Caboche was with him, carrying in his arms a baby scarcely a month old, which he caressed incessantly. But for the vacant silliness in his constant smile, the Master-Chief might have been thought in reality the happiest person in the group.

"Congratulate me, my dear Master-Chief elect! and do not forget, above all things, Mademoiselle Caboche, those two beautiful lines in which I impute all the courage of the English to eating such excellent beef as they do!—those who want to be valiant will be incessantly sending to the shambles—and that is good for trade!" said Roman de la Rose. "Congratulate me, my dear friend. I have only to change the names and turn St. Andrew into St. George in the poetry I composed for the entry of my Lord of Burgundy, to suit the present circumstances."

"Rhys ap Goronwy!" said a knight in a travel-stained gear, who at this moment joined the group, on a wearied horse. "Or have you forgotten me?"

"My noble master! my dearest lord! thrice welcome!" said Rhys, bursting into tears of joy. "We heard no tidings of you, and feared you had perished with the duke at Montereau!"

"I have been a prisoner there, because I refused allegiance to his assassin; I am but just released by the arms of the English and of Sir John Talbot—without ransom!" replied the Chevalier Sauvage. "But do not fear for me; I am in Paris on a special purpose that shall prove my security! What do ye here?"

"We—I—I may not refuse, being Master-Chief elect, and father of this urchin!" said Rhys. "I am here, ap Tudor, to present the loyal duty of the Boucherie to the kings and queens as they pass!"

"I blame thee not, ap Goronwy ap Iolch Dhu!" replied the

knight, with a profound sigh. "I am here to offer my sword and allegiance to Henry of England! Thine is a pretty boy!"

"We call him Renaud, messire—I had fearful dreams about him; but you see he is still a mere babe in arms!" said Simon Caboche, very earnestly, pressing the unconscious infant in his arms as if to protect it from some vague presence of danger.

"Yes, dear father. Ah! that he might continue so innocent and so happy for ever!" sighed the young mother.

"And there never was such a woman as Huéline de Troye, knight?" inquired Simon, with an intense and yet vacant expression of eagerness.

The knight made no reply—perhaps because within a few instants the harbingers of the procession made their appearance.

To save all disputes on precedence, the kings of France and of England, with their queens borne on the most sumptuous litters between them, rode abreast at the head of the procession. The new Duke of Burgundy, in complete mourning, rode immediately behind the litters with his duchess, and a vast retinue of ladies, nobles, knights, and soldiery of all the three nations followed. The butchers instantly set their fine ox in movement; and, as it was set down in the programme that the congratulations of the Boucherie were to be received at this point, the two monarchs halted with all their retinue. Gules Caboche pronounced her verses to admiration, and even to the satisfaction of the critical poet himself, who feared only that the beauty of his verses might be marred in the delivery.

"By the Lord, I do believe thou art right, pretty dame! and our English valour is three parts beef, and the rest strong ale!" said Henry, laughing heartily. "Let my good French take their king's word for it, and feed themselves into such stout gear that we may all go together and take Constantinople from the Turk, with the mere terror of our jolly looks!—What say you, lady? Can you spare me awhile on this enterprise?"

"Not an instant, my dearest lord and king!" replied the loving bride, smiling and blushing.

"Let us wait till our heir is born, and then will I cheerfully undertake to keep France for my grandson till your return!" said Isabeau de Bavière.

"Good mother, we thank you—but we doubt, France cannot be ruled with a distaff!" replied the king, coldly. "And, now, what pageant is this of a knight who seems to be taken down from some old armoury and not dusted?"

"I am the Chevalier Sauvage, sire!" replied a mournful but steady voice. "The Chevalier Sauvage!—come hither to prove the integrity of my love—mine innocence of all art or part in the Duke of Burgundy's treacherous murder—my admiratior

your generous deeds—my thirst for vengeance on all this perfidious people—by offering you my allegiance and sword!"

"Right joyfully do I accept it!" replied Henry V. "Yea, and as the best augury we have yet received of triumph over all our enemies!—And look you, gentle mother, do not bridle and stare so angrily at the knight; for our sweet spouse has fully and merrily informed us how this love of his, whereof he speaks so mincingly, once soared—not to your sacred height—to hers! But now she shines even above the loftiest mists of Snowdon; and we bid the Chevalier Sauvage welcome to our train."

"Lady, you see!—I have not forgotten my promise!" said Owen, with a sorrowful smile, as he gazed at the magnificent bride of France and England.

"Neither will I forget mine!" replied the queen of Henry V., with the gayest good humour imaginable. And she did not! Every reader of English history is aware that the royal Tudor dynasty, whose blood still flows in the veins of our kings, sprang from the union of an obscure Welsh gentleman with the widow of Henry V. That great prince died within a year of his nuptials, of an ignoble disease, and shortly after the birth of the future unfortunate Henry VI., whose half-brother, the son of Owen Tudor and of Catherine of France, became the father of Henry VII., and consequently the ancestor of all the subsequent sovereigns of England, thus fulfilling the oracle of Glendower by the very means taken to prevent it!

It must be confessed by the historian, that the marriage between the widow of Henry V. and Sir Owen Tudor of Penmynydd followed rather precipitately on the demise of that magnanimous monarch. But the reader of this private chronicle will not be greatly surprised.—All that is known of its other personages may be comprised in the fact, that about the same period Sir Pierre de Giac was assassinated almost in the presence of the dauphin, whose favour he had gained so rapidly and completely as to excite the hatred of the Armagnac courtiers. He was seized in his bed one night by armed ruffians, strangled, and thrown into the Loire. Very shortly afterwards his widow married the Lord de la Tremouille, disregarding the slight circumstance that he had been one of the principal plotters in her husband's destruction. Whether they lived "happy and happy for ever after," according to the conclusion of fairy tales, we cannot at this moment verify; but the Lady de la Tremouille is celebrated in the chronicles of the times as the wittiest, liveliest, and most intriguing lady of the court of Charles VII.!

THE END.

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